The Teachings of Syrianus on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*

By SARAH KLITENIC WEAR

STUDIES IN PLATONISM, NEOPLATONISM, AND THE PLATONIC TRADITION

BRILL

The Teachings of Syrianus on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*

Ancient Mediterranean and Medieval Texts and Contexts

Editors

Robert M. Berchman

Jacob Neusner

Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition

Edited by

Robert M. Berchman
Dowling College and Bard College

John F. Finamore
University of Iowa

Editorial Board

JOHN DILLON (Trinity College, Dublin) – GARY GURTLER (Boston College)

JEAN-MARC NARBONNE (Laval University, Canada)

VOLUME 10

The Teachings of Syrianus on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*

By
Sarah Klitenic Wear

BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2011

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Wear, Sarah Klitenic.
The teachings of Syrianus on Plato's Timaeus and Parmenides / by Sarah Klitenic Wear.
p. cm. – (Ancient Mediterranean and medieval texts and contexts) (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic tradition ; v. 10)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-90-04-19290-4 (hardback : alk. paper)
1. Syrianus. 2. Plato. Timaeus. 3. Plato. Parmenides. 4. Proclus, ca. 410-485. On the Timaeus. 5. Proclus, ca. 410-485. In Parmenidem. 6. Damaskios, ca. 480-ca. 550. In Parmenidem. 7. Damaskios, ca. 480-ca. 550. Aporiai kai lyseis peri ton proton archon. I. Title.

B387.W43 2011
184–dc22

2010050620

ISSN 1871-188X
ISBN 978 90 04 19290 4

Copyright 2011 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Hotei Publishing,
IDC Publishers, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and VSP.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA.
Fees are subject to change.

For John M. Dillon and Kenneth Wear

With Love and Gratitude to Both

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements IX
Abbreviations of Manuscripts XI

Introduction 1
A. Life 1
B. Works 3
C. Philosophical Position 4
D. Problems of Methodology and Notes on Syrianus' Methodology 20
E. Review of Scholarship 26
F. Notes on Present Edition 29

FRAGMENTS

In Tim. Fr. 1 32
In Tim. Fr. 2 44
In Tim. Fr. 3 52
In Tim. Fr. 4 60
In Tim. Fr. 5 66
In Tim. Fr. 6 72
In Tim. Fr. 7 80
In Tim. Fr. 8 86
In Tim. Fr. 9 98
In Tim. Fr. 10 106
In Tim. Fr. 11 112
In Tim. Fr. 12 118
In Tim. Fr. 13 124
In Tim. Fr. 14 130
In Tim. Fr. 15 138
In Tim. Fr. 16 142
In Tim. Fr. 17 152
In Tim. Fr. 18 158
In Tim. Fr. 19 166

In Tim. Fr. 20 172
In Tim. Fr. 21 180
In Tim. Fr. 22 188
In Tim. Fr. 23 194
In Tim. Fr. 24 200
In Tim. Fr. 25 208

In Parm. Fr. 1 214
In Parm. Fr. 2 222
In Parm. Fr. 3 230
In Parm. Fr. 4 242
In Parm. Fr. 5 252
In Parm. Fr. 6 272
In Parm. Fr. 7 280
In Parm. Fr. 8 286
In Parm. Fr. 9 296
In Parm. Fr. 10 302
In Parm. Fr. 11 312
In Parm. Fr. 12 316
In Parm. Fr. 13 320
In Parm. Fr. 14 324
In Parm. Fr. 14a 328
In Parm. Fr. 15 330

Abbreviations of Works Frequently Cited 333
Bibliography 335
Index of Philosophical Terms and Names 345
Index of Passages from Ancient Authors 349

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Syrianus the Platonist on Plato's Timaeus *and* Parmenides is a revision of a doctoral dissertation done under the guidance of John M. Dillon at Trinity College, Dublin. It has been revised under his care and thanks to the reading of Angela Longo, Anne Sheppard and the anonymous reviewers at Brill. I would also like to thank John Finamore, Stephen Gersh, and Gretchen Reydams-Schils, who have read or heard and commented upon sections of the text at various times. I would like to further thank Margriet van der Wel, the desk editor at Brill, for her care and help in preparation of this manuscript.

This book is dedicated to John M. Dillon, my beloved teacher, at whose feet this work was composed. He has dedicated hundreds of hours over the years to discussing Syrianus with me, and his wife Jean, facilitated him in doing so. Being in the presence of this great and kind man has been one of the greatest blessings of my life.

I would like to thank Bibliopolis for permission to reprint sections of my article, "Syrianus' Teachings on the Soul in Proclus' *Commentary on the* Timaeus", in "*Syrianus et la métaphysique de l'Antiquité tardive*". *Actes du Colloque international Syrianus et la métaphysique de l'Antiquité tardive, Université de Genève, 29 septembre–1er octobre 2006* Ed. Anglea Longo. Bibliopolis (Naples, 2009); I would also like to thank *Classical Quarterly* for permission to reprint sections of my article, "Syrianus the Platonist on Eternity and Time" *Classical Quarterly* (vol. 58.2, 2008), pp. 648–660. I would further like to thank *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* for permission to reprint sections of my article, "Syrianus on the One", *IJPT* vol. 6 (2011).

This book is also dedicated to my sweet and good husband, Kenneth Wear, without whose support and willingness to mind our four small children, this book would never have seen its completion. I would also like to acknowledge our children. The children are named: Beatrice, Agnes, Myles, and Lucy. I hope they are pleased with seeing their names in a book.

ABBREVIATIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS

In Tim. fr. 1–25 (manuscripts and abbreviations used by Diehl, In Platonis Timaeum Commentaria*, vol. 1–3)*

C	Coislinianus 322 saec. XI/XII
D	cod. Parisinus graec. 1838 saec. XVI
M	Marcianus 195 saec. XIV exeuntis
P	(olim F) Parisinus 1840 saec. XVI
N	Neapolitanus Borbonicus III D 28 a. 1314
Q	(olim P) Parisinus suppl. graec. 666 saec. XIV
QD	(ς) loco quodam illius paginae ς solam exhibere te docet ueram lectionem
ς	recensio uulgata bedition Basileensis a. 1534 AMonacensis 382
s	Schneider qui edidit a. 1847 Vratislauiae
t	Taylor qui vertit in linguam Anglorum a. 1820 Londinii
add	addidi addidit addendum
ci coni	conieci sim.
em	emendaui sim.
ins	inserui sim.
om	omisit omissis
mg	margo
or. Chald.	De oraculis chaldaicis scr. G. Kroll Vratislauiae a. 1894
⟨ ⟩	additamenta
⟦ ⟧	delenda
[ ]	addenda quae ad fenestras codicum explendas inserta sunt

Abbreviations for In Parm. *Fr. 1–9, Proclus,* In Parm.*, vol. 1-III Steel*

A	Parisinus gr. 1810, saec. XIII ex.
A^{1}	lectio primi librarii
A^{2}	lectio secundi librarii (ante 1358)

A^{3}	lectio tertii librarii (ante 1358)
A^{4}	lectio recentioris librarii, saec. XV?
M	Ambrosianus gr. 159 (B 165 sup.), saec. XIV
M^{b}	lectio post Bessarionis correctionem
F	Laurentianus plut. LXXXV 8, saec. XV (a. 1489)
G	Scorialensis T. II. 8 (gr. 147), saec. XVI (a. 1559–1563)
R	Vaticanus Rossianus gr. 962, saec. XVI
W	Vindobonensis phil. gr. 7, saec. XVI (a. 1561)
P	Monacensis gr. 425, saec. XVI
Σ	consensus codicum FGP (Libri IV–VII) RW (usque ad IV 911.34)
g	interpretatio latina Guillelmi de Moerbeka, saec. XIII ex. (ante a. 1286), secundum editionem C. Steel
Γ	exemplar graecum Guillelmi de Moerbeka (deperditum)
A^{8}	interpretatio Guillelmi de Moerbeka in codice Ambrosiano A 167 sup., saec. XVI (a. 1508)
PLAT. B	Bodleianus Clark. 39, saec. IX (a. 895)
PLAT. C	Tubingensis Mb 14, saec. XI
PLAT. D	Marcianus gr. 185, saec. XII
PLAT. T	Marcianus App. Class. IV 1, saec. X medio
PLAT. W	Vindobonensis Suppl. gr. 7, saec. XI
PLAT. codd.	consensus codicum PLAT. BCDTW

Sigla in textu:

⟨ ⟩	additio
[ ]	additio ex interpretatione latina
{ }	textus delendus
…	lacuna
add.	addidit
cens.	censuit
coni.	coniecit
corr.	correxit
del.	delevit
eras.	erasum
exp.	expunxit
hab.	habet/habent
in mg.	in margine
inv.	invertit
iter.	iteravit
litt.	litterae (-arum, -is)
om.	omisit
ras.	rasura
spat. vac.	spatium (-o) vacuum (-o)
stat.	statuit
transp.	transposuit

Abbreviations for In Parm *Fr. 11–15, Damascius,*
In Parm., De Prin., Dub. et Sol., *Westerink*

A	Marcianus gr. 246, s. IX.
add.	addidit
del.	delevit

INTRODUCTION

A. *Life*

Syrianus,[1] successor to Plutarch of Athens as head of the Athenian school of Platonism from 432–437,[2] is best known through the writings of his well-published pupil, Proclus. In the introduction to his commentary on Plato's *Parmenides*, Proclus offers the following encomium to his teacher Syrianus:

> "So may all the orders of divine beings help to prepare me fully to share in this most illuminating and mystical vision that Plato reveals to us in the *Parmenides* with a profundity appropriate to its subject; and which has been unfolded to us, with his own very lucid applications, by one who was in very truth a fellow Bacchant with Plato and filled entirely with divine truth, and who, by leading us to the understanding of this vision has become a true hierophant of these divine doctrines. Of him I would say that he came to men as the exact image of philosophy for the benefit of souls here below, in recompense for the statues, temples, and the whole ritual of worship, and as the chief author of salvation for men who now live and for those to come hereafter. So may all the higher powers be propitious to us and be ready with their gifts to illuminate us also with the light that comes from them and leads us upwards." (Proclus, *In Parm.* 618)[3]

---

[1] Something of Syrianus' background is known through works such as Damascius' *Philosophical History*; Syrianus was related to Aedesia and Ammonianus (Damascius, *PH* 47; 54). Damascius informs us, moreover, that he was tall, good-looking, and strong and more beloved of the gods than Ammonianus. Regarding other details of Syrianus' physical appearance, the reader is left to his own imagination.

[2] In addition to Proclus, Syrianus' students included Isidore, Hermeias, and Domninus (Damascius, *PH*, 34D; 54; 89A).

[3] Translation Morrow-Dillon (1987). Proclus offers similar praise to Syrianus in *PT* I, 1 pp. 7–8 (where Syrianus is called a hierophant) and *In Remp*. I, 71.2. In his praise of Syrianus in his *Parmenides Commentary*, Proclus makes it seem that Syrianus is one of the pure souls who descend willingly for the aid of the human race. This passage is not a hymn, however, because Proclus addresses the higher powers, rather than his teacher. For a hymn to a philosopher see Lucretius' hymn to Epicurus in *De rerum natura* V. 1–54. See also Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*, ch. 22 where Porphyry calls on the Muses before he writes praise of Plotinus.

One gathers from this quotation that Syrianus was a figure of immense religious and spiritual importance to Proclus. As the "exact image of philosophy", Syrianus personified the philosophical art for Proclus in such a way that it is impossible to avoid Syrianic thought in Proclus' own philosophy, so pervasive is his philosophy in the works of Proclus. Moreover, although Proclus frequently mentions his teacher when discussing a point, more often than not Syrianus is behind Proclus' discourse even when he goes unmentioned. In his *Life of Proclus*, Marinus discusses the close relationship between Syrianus and Proclus:

> "Now the old man lived only two years more with Proclus as his lodger, and then when he died he entrusted the young man to his successor Syrianus, as he also did his grandson Archiadas. And when Syrianus took him, he not only gave him more help wth his scholarly pursuits, but made him his housemate from then on and a sharer in his philosophic life, finding in him the sort of hearer and successor that he had long desired to have, as he was able to receive his manifold learning and divine teachings."[4]

Proclus was the hand-picked successor of Syrianus, who not only studied at the feet of Syrianus, but lived with him and adapted his philosophical way of life, even positioning himself within ear-shot of his Master at death.[5]

Little is known about Syrianus' personal history—the major study on the person of Syrianus remains K. Praechter's article, "Syrianos" in *R.E* (IV A 1728–1729), the information for which seems based on Marinus' *Life of Proclus*. Marinus notes that Syrianus was the son of Philoxenus and that he became head of the school of Athens in 431/2 after Plutarch's death.[6] In addition to overseeing Proclus, he was the teacher of Hermeias and Domninus. He died, according to Marinus, shortly after a period when he was to read either Orphic writings or Chaldean Oracles with Domninus and Proclus, in the midst of his service as *diadochos*.[7]

---

[4] Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 12, translation Edwards (2000).

[5] Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 36. Marinus tells the story that Syrianus had requested two vaults—one for himself, one for Proclus—in one tomb. When Proclus later worried out of piety that it would be improper for him to be buried with Syrianus, Syrianus appeared to him in a dream to persuade him otherwise (Marinus, *ibid*). The inscription on Proclus' tomb, which he shares with his teacher, Syrianus, on Mt. Lycabettus reads: "Proclus I was, by race a man of Lycia, whom Syrianus Fostered here to become the successor to his own school. This is the common tomb which received the bodies of both men; Oh may a single Place be a portion of both their souls." Marinus, *ibid.* trans. Edwards.

[6] Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 11

[7] Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 26.

After his death, Domninus took the chair at the Athenian School for a short while, followed by Proclus, who became head until his death in 485.

B. *Works*

The written product of Syrianus' teaching is scant: extant works include a textbook on rhetoric (*In Hermogenem*, a commentary on Hermogenes' *De Ideis* and *De Statibus*)[8] and a commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, books B, Γ, M, N (*In Metaphysica*).[9] The *Suda* (IV 478, 21) attributes the following works to Syrianus s.v. Συριανός:

> Ἔγραψεν
> Εἰς Ὅμηρον ὅλεν ὑπόμνημα ἐν Βιβλίοις ζ΄.
> Εἰς τὴν Πολιτείαν Πλάτωνος Βιβλία δ΄.
> Εἰς τὴν Ὀρφέως θεολόγιαν βιβλία Β΄
> [Εἰς τὰ Πρόκλου] Περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὁμήρῳ θεῶν
> Συμφωνίαν Ὀρφέως, Πυφαγόρου καί Πλάτωνος
> Περὶ τὰ λόγια, βιβλία δέκα
> Καὶ ἄλλα τινὰ ἐζηγητικά.

There is some debate as to whether these works were actually authored by Syrianus because Proclus is listed as the author of works with the same titles, Suda s.v. Πρόκλος. E. Zeller, in *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*,[10] claims that the works were written by Proclus and that this list was tacked on to Syrianus' entry. Praechter, in "Das Schriftenverzeichnis des Neuplatonikers Syrianos bei Sudas",[11] attributes the works to Syrianus, arguing that Syrianus' works were falsely attributed to Proclus. A.D.R. Sheppard suggests that both Syrianus and Proclus may have written works with the same title.[12] H.-D. Saffrey maintains that Proclus edited Syrianus' work, while R.L. Cardullo regards

---

[8] There is actually some debate as to whether the author of *In Hermogenem* is the same Syrianus who was head of the Athenian School, though there is no compelling reason to deny the identification. The work is, however, dedicated to the author's son, Alexander, of whom we have no other evidence, even as there is none of Syrianus' being married. It is possible that his purported son was a spiritual "son".

[9] See *CAG* VI.1 (902). These are now treated in the Aristotelian Commentators series, by O'Meara and Dillon (2006–2008.) It remains unclear whether Syrianus wrote a commentary on the other books of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, but probably not.

[10] Zeller (1903) 818ff.

[11] Praechter (1973) 253–254.

[12] Sheppard (1980) 46.

the entire list as suspect.[13] It is possible that Proclus' works as listed are written versions and elaborations of Syrianus' lectures on the same subject.

In addition to the works listed in the *Suda*, it seems that Syrianus delivered lectures which later formed the basis for Hermias' *Commentary on the Phaedrus*. Whether he actually composed commentaries on other dialogues of Plato remains uncertain. The issue of the possible appropriation of Syrianus' unwritten teaching by Proclus in commentary-form will be taken up in section D of this introduction, on methodology.

C. *Philosophical Position*

While it is somewhat premature to summarise Syrianus' metaphysics based on fragments of his teachings on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*, by gathering such evidence as appears in the attested "fragments", we can begin to see a picture develop of what the Syrianic cosmos looked like and how it influenced Proclus' metaphysics. As the hallmark of his metaphysics, Syrianus postulates a new level of reality for every difficulty he finds in the text of the *Timaeus*, while every step in the argument of the first and second hypotheses in the *Parmenides* represents also a distinct level of reality. This reality, moreover, displays Syrianus' impulse to proliferate levels of triads—an impulse which originated with Iamblichus, who distinguished three triads at the level of intellect.[14] Syrianus, indeed, comes to many of his conclusions by appropriating the opinions of Porphyry and Iamblichus, taking aspects of each to create, out of often contradictory views, one coherent doctrine. This doctrine was then elaborated upon by Proclus, who created even more ranks within Syrianus' tiered cosmos.

The One

Syrianus' description of the One is encapsulated in his treatment of the first and second hypotheses of the *Parmenides*:[15] what is systematically denied of the One in the first hypothesis is affirmed of the One in

[13] Saffrey (1984) 161–171; Cardullo (1986) 112–124. C.-P. Manolea summarises these arguments (2004) 44–45.

[14] Cf. Procl. *In Tim* I 308, 18ff. and Appendix C to Dillon (1973).

[15] Unfortunately, for Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*, only his discussion of the first hypothesis is extant (though some evidence in the interpretation of the second is derivable both from there and from the *Platonic Theology*.) Damascius, however, seems

the second, so that each positive attribute corresponds in order to the preceding negation:

> "All things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of being; and also that the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics" (Proclus, *In Parm*. 1062.10–1062.17.)[16]

Hence, the first hypothesis says that the One is beyond multiplicity and simple and partless; however, the second hypothesis allows us to note how the One contains a beginning, middle, and end when the One is looked at with respect to others.[17] The One is thus simple (with respect to itself—the Absolute One) or participated (with respect to the generated cosmos): Syrianus says that when Plato discusses the One as unparticipated and participated, he distinguishes between the two by adding τι to ἕν when discussing the participated One. This concept breaks from Iamblichus' discussion of the "particular", rather than participated, One[18]—the 'particular ones' refers to a doctrine of henads, which will be described below. For Syrianus, the connection between the two hypotheses exists because the negative propositions are tied to the positive; the ways in which the One "is not" is another way of attributing something to the One—i.e., negative statements say that the One is other than these things.[19] This mode of thinking is a correction to Iamblichus' idea that the One is ineffable: if anything were attributed to it, such terms would subtract from and diminish the One. For Syrianus, at the intelligible level, negative statements can be specificatory: because each form has its own identity, it can be said that the One "is not" rest; because it is not movement, identity; and so forth. At the sensible level, negation is a denial of attributes. Syrianus distinguishes between περὶ τοῦ ἑνός, referring to the One, and περὶ τὸ ἕν, talking about the One.[20] In the first case, the use of the genitive when discussing the topic of the One is permissible, as it implies that the One is only being mentioned as a subject. In the

---

to have been aware of the remainder of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides* and comments on both it and Syrianus' teaching as revealed in it.

[16] Trans. Morrow-Dillon (1987).

[17] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 4 Wear.

[18] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 12 Wear.

[19] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 6 Wear. Iamblichus attributes characteristics denied of the One itself to the lower elements of henadic realm. See Iamblichus, *In Tim*. Fr. 29 Dillon.

[20] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 10 Wear.

second case, the accusative suggests that the One is being discussed and that things are being said about the content of the One; this is impossible, because when humans speak about the One, they use sensible language, which the One transcends. Proclus agrees with and expands his teacher's thinking on this subject, arguing two additional ways in which the One is transcendent and immanent in *The Platonic Theology* II.12: the One has the power of generation; the One can be approached by the soul, but only when it leaves behind dialectic (as a form of sensible discourse) in mystical ascent.

Syrianus, then, discusses the One and its relation to the generated universe based on the first and second hypotheses of the *Parmenides*. Syrianus, like Iamblichus, does not consider the One in its absolute state even in the first hypothesis; instead, he describes the One in its capacity for generating gods. In a rather strange passage, Damascius credits Syrianus with positing an ineffable One beyond the One:

> "There is, then, a certain relation perceived between the two, such as the relationship of extremes, these things forming a sequence: the Unified, the relation, the One, and beyond the One there will be a unique principle, the Ineffable."
>
> (Syrianus *In Parm*, fr. 11 Wear = Damascius, *De Princip*. II. 17, 1–17.)

That Syrianus postulated an ineffable One beyond the One is a questionable proposal, as there is no other textual evidence that I have found to support the claim here, but since Iamblichus had done so before him, it is not impossible. It is possible that Damascius is reading into Syrianus his own structure of the Ineffable, followed by a generative One. It is also possible, one may suppose, that Damascius had access to more material that what is now extant and that Syrianus' Ineffable One appears in now lost material. When Proclus inherits Syrianus' One, he tightens the subject matter of the first hypothesis, arguing that it is about the absolute One. The ineffable, however, would not, as such, be the proper subject of any of the hypotheses.

Peras *and* Apeiria

After the One, Syrianus places *peras* (Limit) and *apeiria* (Unlimitedness), features of the henadic realm which filter down and pervade every level of existence. The following chart, reproduced and discussed at length in *In Parm*. Fr. 5 below, outlines the levels of being and how Limit and Unlimitedness affect them.

Rank	*Unlimit (Chaos)*	*Limit (Aether)*
Matter	formless of itself	forms and shapes are limits of matter
Unqualified Body	divisible to infinity	limited in size; body as a whole is limited
Qualities	contain more and less	quantity is limited in material things
Realm of generation	constant coming into being and ceaseless cycle	creation of forms in matter; nothing of all things perishes (forms continue)
circuits of heaven	possesses unlimited power of that which moves it; happens continuously	places limit upon the disorderly elements in matter; turns back on itself and limits itself
Soul	power of unceasing motion	circuits of the soul are uniform
Time	measures whole circuit of the soul—power which unfolds circuits of the soul is unlimited	proceeds according to number; measure of the circuits of the soul
Intellect	eternal motion and unfailing continuity	remains in itself; its life is single and eternal and same
Eternity	comprehends the whole intellectual infinity. It is power itself	Measure of all intellectual activity and bound of the life of intellect (mixed entity, formed of Limit and Unlimitedness)
Infinity/Essential Limit	fount of all infinity	foundation of all limits

The pair reveal the transcendent nature of the One and the One as the cause of all things; *peras* is responsible for unity and sameness, while *apeiria* causes production, procession, and plurality. Everything, thus, contains Limit and Unlimitedness, with the exception of the One, which exists beyond it. Syrianus assumes these cosmic principles from Iamblichus, who placed them after his second One.[21] Unlike Iamblichus, who made the second One a monad and called *peras* and *apeiria* together a dyad, Syrianus seems to assimilate Iamblichus' "second One" to *peras* as monad, while characterising *apeiria* as an (indefinite) dyad. Proclus uses both terms, depending on the context of his discussion.[22]

[21] Cf. Iambl. *In Tim*. fr. 7 Dillon.

[22] Proclus sometimes uses "dyad" to refer to *peras* and *apeiria* in his commentary on Plato's *Parmenides*, while in other writings, he refers to *apeiria* as the dyad. See Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 5 Wear, and Sheppard (1982) 3–6.

The Henomenon

Before the noetic triad, Syrianus discusses a relationship between the One and what he terms, following Iamblichus, "the Unified" (*to hênomenon*) which relates these extremes of the henadic realm: the One, the Unified, and the relationship can be taken to constitute a triad. Moreover, between the *hênomenon* and Being he posits a bond called *dynamis*; the *hênomenon*, Being, and this bond (*skhesis*) constitute a second triad.[23] The *henomenon* participates in the One and is the first product of the relationship between *peras* and *apeiria*. The second triad, of *henomenon* and Being (or *Nous*) and their bond, may owe something to Porphyry's doctrine of the One. Porphyry is reported by Damascius[24] as making the One the "Father" of the intelligible triad Being, Life, and Intellect, so that the head of the noetic world is also the One at least in its positive, creative aspect. Syrianus, while not adopting Porphyry's peculiar theory, expands this interpretation of the One by explaining the relationship between the One and the noetic world in terms of the two triads—different functions of the One are expressed in terms of individual cosmic entities. Such a thesis creates a drawn-out and elaborate cosmos, as opposed to Porphyry's compact universe based on the premise that the Father of the intelligible triad is the One.

Henads

In the Syrianic cosmos, the henads represent the link between the henadic and intelligible realm—they connect the two in a way which the absolute transcendence of the One would otherwise seem to render impossible. As aspects of the One which pervade the universe, the henads do not have a precise location *per se*, as might an hypostasis such as Intellect, or Soul, for instance. Still, it is possible to locate where they first enter the cosmos. The henads are the lowest element in the realm of the One, below *peras* and *apeiria*, and constitute the link to the Intelligible. The Unified (*hênomenon*), however, is also the product of *peras* and *apeiria* and the link to the Intelligible. It seems, then, that either Syrianus makes the contents of the *hênomenon* the henads or he makes the *hênomenon* the totality of the henads. Most likely both are true, with the *hênomenon* possessing the simultaneous unity and plurality which the first and second hypotheses of the *Parmenides* bring to light with respect to the One.

---

[23] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 11 Wear.
[24] Damascius, *De Princ*. Ch. 43.

There has been some discussion as to whether the theory of the henads originated with Syrianus or if they existed already in Iamblichus' cosmology. While E.R. Dodds credited Syrianus with first postulating the henads in his edition of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, (pp. 257–260), he later retracts a key piece of evidence in his *addenda* and *corrigenda*. The point at issue for Dodds (and for Dillon) is a position attributed by Proclus in *In Parmenidem* 1066.16 to "some of those revered by us" (τινες τῶν ἡμῖν αἰδοίων) that the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* addresses "god and the gods", by which Proclus understands "henads". Dodds initially attributes this statement to Syrianus, and then later retracts it. It is clear, however, that Syrianus located the gods in the second hypothesis, leaving the first hypothesis for the One alone (1061.20–1063.1) and that Iamblichus is most likely the author of this doctrine. Dillon first attributed the doctrine of the henads referred to in 1066.16ff. to Iamblichus, arguing that this doctrine does, indeed, reflect Syrianus and Proclus' concept of the henads, rather than mere noetic beings, the suggestion of Saffrey and Westerink.[25] Dillon argues that Iamblichus was prepared to identify the henads, while serving as the lowest "participated" element of the realm of the One, also as objects of intellection.[26] For Iamblichus, the One-Being exists in itself and is substantially identical with the highest level of *Nous*;[27] in this way that it can be viewed as a unity and multiplicity—when viewed as an intelligised multiplicity, Iamblichus calls this gods or henads.[28] Syrianus makes the *hênomenon* (not the *hen on*) the contents of the forms and places gods in every level of the universe; his metaphysics, thus, prohibits the henads as objects of intellection. For Syrianus, each intelligible level is presided over by a henad—the henads adjust to suit every level, existing noetically in the noetic levels, noerically in the noeric levels.[29]

The structure of the henadic realm is, therefore, as follows:[30]

[25] Saffrey-Westerink (1978) ix–xl. Saffrey and Westerink argue that Iamblichus use *henas* to denote the forms.

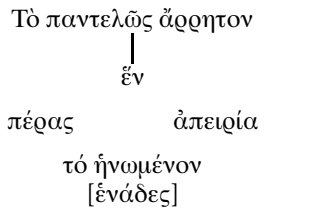
[26] See Dillon (1972). More recently, Dillon approached the topic again (1993).

[27] Cf. *In Tim*. fr. 29.

[28] Dillon (1993) 50ff.

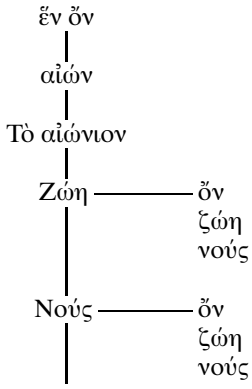
[29] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 7 Wear.

[30] This chart is reproduced and discussed in-depth in Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 17 Wear.



Iamblichus and Syrianus agree here

Syrianus' explanation of the first noetic triad:



Monad (τὸ ἁπλώς εἶναι)

Dyad of ἀεί+ ὄν (τὸ ἀεὶ εἶναι)
(this is the σχέσις between ἕν + ὄν)

The Noetic Realm

Syrianus designs the noetic realm so that every layer of reality is marked by a level of divinity. Layers of reality, moreover, inter-relate so that the lowest level of one realm is the highest of the next. Syrianus' hierarchy of noetic, noetic-noeric, and noeric gods is further divided into triads, which become even further divided by Proclus—a cosmos he describes over the course of the *Platonic Theology*. The noetic realm thus has the following levels of gods,[31] which Syrianus relates to *Parmenides* 144 E 8–148 D 4.[32] The hierarchy, as set out in 2–4.3 of J. Opsomer's appendix to his article, "Proclus on Demiurgy and Procession: A Neoplatonic Reading of the *Timaeus*"[33] appears as follows:

> The intelligible gods: Being
> 1st intelligible triad: One-Being
> 2nd intelligible triad: Eternity
> 3rd intelligible triad: Intelligible Intellect (Paradigm)

---

[31] For a discussion of these levels, see Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 16 Wear.
[32] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 16 Wear.
[33] Opsomer (2000).

The intelligible-intellective gods: Life
1st intelligible-intellective triad
2nd intelligible-intellective triad
3rd intelligible-intellective triad
The intellective gods: Intellect (a Hebdomad)
1st intellective triad
Kronos
Rhea
Zeus (intellective intellect): Demiurge
2nd Intellective Triad: the Maintainers; the Kouretes; the "Implacables"
Seventh Divinity: membrane (*hypezōkōs*)
The hypercosmic gods
The hypercosmic-encosmic gods
The encosmic gods

Zeus, as the demiurgic monad, oversees the demiurgic gods as they exist in the hypercosmic and encosmic realms. Thus, the hypercosmic and encosmic realms mirror the intellective order so that each consists of a triad of which Zeus is a member. This structure seems to be adopted by Proclus almost unchanged in his published works.

Aeon

Eternity is the duality ἀεί and ὄν and is, in a sense, an aspect of One-Being, where it remains at the summit of the intelligible realm.[34] Proclus places Eternity in the second triad of the intelligible realm. Eternity, thus, is substantially Being, because it precedes Intellect, but it resides in the third intelligible triad in a causal way.[35] Proclus, likewise, places Eternity in the second triad of the intelligible realm and states that Eternity remains in the One of the intelligible realm.[36] With this structure, Proclus says that Eternity is substantially Being, but Intellect in a causal way.

Paradigm

Syrianus, as with Iamblichus, Porphyry, and Theodore of Asine, approaches the Paradigm—the sum of the forms used by the Demiurge in creation—in terms of its relationship to the Demiurge. The Paradigm as the αὐτοζῶον is the third intelligible triad (after One-Being and Eternity) and contains the causes of all being and the four forms.[37] As such, it is

[34] Syrianus, *In Tim*. Fr. 17.
[35] Proclus, *ET* prop. 65; *In Tim*. II, p. 14, 11–15; *PT* III p. 57.
[36] Proclus, *In Tim*. II 15, pp. 13–15.
[37] Syrianus, *In Tim*. Fr. 8.

superior to the Demiurge, Syrianus argues, and exists ontologically prior to it. The Demiurge looks to the Paradigm, contemplating it as a superior object. However, were the Demiurge to contemplate the Paradigm as something external, he would see it through sensation, rather than intellection. Vision, as sensation, moreover, would give the Demiurge an incomplete conception of the Paradigm—as an *eidôlon*, his vision would be a shadow of the Paradigm, which we know is not possible.[38] Syrianus solves this by arguing that the Paradigm exists prior to the Demiurge noetically, and within the Demiurge noerically: the Demiurge contemplates the Paradigm by reflecting upon himself. The Paradigm, thus, exists simultaneously as an object of thought and as thinker itself through an act of reflective contemplation.[39] This represents an innovation in the debates over the Paradigm and its location with relation to the Demiurge: Longinus situated the Paradigm after the Demiurge (which Syrianus faults because it forces the Demiurge to contemplate something inferior to it); Porphyry argued that the Paradigm is prior to the Demiurge (which would mean that the Paradigm must be seen by the Intellect, an impossibility were the Paradigm placed before the Demiurge); and Plotinus concluded that the Paradigm is in the Demiurge (an impossibility because if the Demiurge had the forms in him primally he would be *noetos*—but the Paradigm cannot be in the Demiurge because the Demiurge contains the forms of heavenly bodies). Proclus seems to adopt Syrianus' opinion on the matter whole-heartedly.

Demiurge

The Demiurge represents Zeus, the third member of the first intellective triad, comprised of Kronos, Rhea, and Zeus.[40] Syrianus' presentation of the Demiurge is based on Iamblichus', which represented an innovation in the history of Platonic interpretation of the Demiurge. Iamblichus made Zeus third among the fathers in the intellectual hebdomad, though, in his *Timaeus Commentary* at least, he seems to have characterised the Demiurge as embracing the whole intelligible universe, also placing classes of being in the Demiurge.[41] This was a Plotinian theory which Porphyry had rejected in favor of locating the Demiurge in the realm

[38] Plotinus, *Enn*. III. 9. 1.
[39] Proclus, *In Tim* I. 323. 20–22.
[40] Syrianus, *In Tim*. Fr. 6 Wear; Proclus, *PT* V.
[41] Proclus, *In Tim*. I, 308.19–23. (Iambl. *In Tim*. fr. 34).

of Soul.[42] Syrianus, moreover, agrees with all three—Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus—with regard to the question of how many demiurges created the Platonic universe. Before Iamblichus, Numenius proposed that there were three gods: the Father, the Creator, and the creation, a position taken up and elaborated upon by Plotinus' pupil Amelius, who posits three demiurges, three intellects and three kings.[43] These were assimilated to the Good as primary cause. Proclus places the Father second after the Creator, asserting that Plato used the same word for "Father" and "Creator", so that Numenius should not identify the paternal principle of the universe with the first principle. Syrianus adopts Plotinus' and Iamblichus' description of the Demiurge, interpreting Phanes as the Demiurge. Zeus, as the fifth king of gods, unifies the universe within himself because he contains the forms. Zeus swallows Phanes because Phanes is identified with the intelligible monad and the αὐτοζῶον, the third member of the triad of intelligibles who produces the sum of all living things and embraces all.[44] In swallowing this exemplary cause, Zeus is transcendent at the level of Intellect, but requires mediation in his demiurgic activity in the form of particular fathers or demiurges.

For Syrianus, the Demiurge, then, is in the realm of the Intellect,[45] at the upper limit of the intellective gods who provide the mediation the Demiurge requires. As head of the intellective gods, he is filled with intelligible monads and assumes leadership over the particular fathers in the hypercelestial and celestial realms. As a monad, he rules over a triad of fathers. The powers of the Demiurgic monad provide the cause for all things holistically, while the demiurgic triad, which is dependent on the monad, oversees parts holistically, wholes partially, and parts partially.[46]

Proclus adopts this hierarchy of demiurgic creation, arguing in *Platonic Theology* V in favor of the Syrianic intellectual hebdomad. As with Syrianus, he says that the Demiurge is in the Intellect and that the triad of Kronos, Rhea and Zeus represent Being, Life, and Intellect. He posits that Zeus, as the third member of the triad, is intellective-intellect and acts as head of two triads of demiurges: the hypercosmic and encosmic. He follows these triads with a seventh divinity, which Proclus calls the "membrane", that separates the Demiurge from the sensible world. Proclus,

[42] Proclus, *In Tim*. I. 307.4–5.
[43] Proclus, *In Tim*. I. 306.1–31.
[44] Syrianus, *In Tim*. Fr. 7 Wear; *OF* 154; Proclus, *In Tim*. I. 314.28.
[45] Syrianus, *In Tim*. Fr. 6 Wear; Proclus, *In Tim*. I, 310.8–15.
[46] Syrianus, *In Tim*. Fr. 6; Proclus, *In Tim*. I 310.16–18 ff.

moreover, posits a complex series of triads presided over by demiurges (all known as "Zeus") who act as the monad of their particular triad: thus, the first Zeus is the monadic demiurge, the second is the monad of the hypercosmic triad, and the third is the monad of the hypercosmic-encosmic gods. Proclus does not credit Syrianus with this elaboration and it seems that it is his innovation, although, of course, it is possible that he adopts this hierarchy from Syrianus without crediting him.

In making the souls, Syrianus explains that the Demiurge uses the mixing bowl because it transmits form to souls.[47] Syrianus establishes that the mixer is the Demiurge, the mixing bowl defines the form of souls, the things mixed are the elements of souls, which proceed from the Demiurge and the mixing bowl, and the product is soul itself.[48] Soul is given form from the generative cause after it became one thing from the action of the mixing bowl. Proclus broadens the function of the mixing bowl from Syrianus' creating partial souls to containing all life, including the world soul.[49] Proclus is also specific about the kind of partial souls created by the crater. These include: divine, angelic, and demonic classes. In creating, moreover, Syrianus says that the Demiurge has a paternal and maternal relationship with the encosmic gods. He contains the *aitia* of both (*zoē* as maternal causality, *on* for paternal causality), which aid in his role as being the maker of forms (εἰδοποιός) and creator of essence (οὐσιοποιός). With these *aitiai*, the Demiurge transmits life and essence to soul, and enforms soul, which then reaches perfection in the mixing bowl.

Psychic Realm

Syrianus presents new doctrine regarding the psychic realm by assuming the World Soul and hypostasis Soul into one being and by his modifications to Iamblichus' doctrine of the descent of the individual soul, including the soul's vehicle.

Time

As with Iamblichus, Syrianus gives a non-temporal explanation for the existence of transcendent Time.[50] Time takes its beginning from above

[47] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 24 Wear.
[48] Proclus, *In Tim*. III. 248.19ff.
[49] Proclus claims to "clarify the thought of our Master" in *In Tim*. III. 248.24–249.26.
[50] Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 62 Dillon.

and imitates Eternity, unfolding Eternity, as a measure of motion, rather than a separate thing. While Iamblichus identifies the levels of reality with the noeric realm, where time itself is the ordering principle, Syrianus refers it to the levels of divine souls that participate in primal Time.[51] Primal Time, moreover, measures the circuits of these souls. Syrianus, relating Time to the level of divine soul, agrees with Iamblichus that there is higher time which relates to the level of divine soul and a level of divine souls participates in primal time.[52] He thus takes the concept of Time unfolding Eternity and extrapolates a lower level which unravels something contained in a concentrated form at the higher level. Syrianus innovates from Iamblichus' concept of time by positing an intermediate entity which is superior to ordinary time, lower than *aiōn*, which is the causal principle of the intellectual world. Syrianus further explains that Day and Night are creative forces causing physical time and dividing themselves into physical day and night; Day and Night are the transcendent paradigms of day and night in the soul,[53] while day and night are the contents of this transcendent time.[54] Day and Night, as the operative parts of time, moreover, function as archetypes and creative forces of physical days and nights.

All—Soul

Syrianus' contribution to the doctrine of the Soul comes in his conflating the World Soul with the hypostasis Soul; elements of the Soul are linked to various levels of the noetic cosmos so that Soul is related to the noetic world on three levels.[55] This is an innovation from the doctrine in which Iamblichus argues that soul is suitably related to all parts of the universe—it is transcendent and part is present around earth and the bulk of the universe.[56]

Another aspect of Syrianic innovation comes in his division of the function of Soul into two, which is unlike Iamblichus who formulates two triads, and then allocates division of function to them. For Syrianus, Soul is one as a reason principle and many because it has division. The principle of oneness in the Soul allows for its triadic remaining

[51] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 9 Wear.
[52] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 8 Wear.
[53] Syrianus, *In Tim*. 18 Wear.
[54] Syrianus, *In Tim*. 18 Wear.
[55] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 13 Wear.
[56] Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 50 Dillon.

in itself, proceeding and returning. This higher aspect is responsible for exercising providence over pure forms in the cosmos. The aspect of many in the Soul reflects the Soul as the sum total of forms; it presides over bodies and partial beings. With these two aspects, the Soul can imitate the holistic activity of the Demiurge, while remaining in Intellect. This aspect of both holistic and individual care of Soul primes the Soul for division into higher and lower categories—a division Syrianus employs, while maintaining the fundamental unity of Soul by making the division in terms of the Soul's function.[57] This dual nature of Soul and division of functions existed in the Platonic tradition. From Theodore of Asine, Syrianus adopts the concept of dividing the function of souls into categories.[58] Proclus adapts and emphasises Syrianus' amalgamation of Iamblichus' doctrine that the soul has a super-cosmic element in it linked to Intellect[59] and Porphyry's doctrine that the Soul has a multiplicity of powers which are present in suitable ways to all parts of the universe.

Individual Soul

Syrianus' greatest contribution to the discussion of the individual soul comes with his description of the descent of the soul and the vehicle of the soul.[60] He describes how divine souls move cyclically, so that as they approach their end, they also produce a beginning. These souls partake in time through their circuits, which results in a cyclical motion—souls are simultaneously younger and older than themselves. While divine souls remain circling above, individual souls descend into generation. Syrianus refers to this descent as the first generation, although there is not one descent absolutely; instead, the soul descends once for every divine circuit. The soul necessarily descends with every circuit because every circuit is the same—if a soul were to descend for one circuit, which it must, it must descend with every circuit. In order to stay above, the soul would have to have an unchanging intellectual power, which only the divine souls can claim. Syrianus adopts this concept that every soul must descend from Iamblichus.[61] From Iamblichus, he acquires the nature of the soul's procession and the concept of the triadic motion of soul.

---

[57] See Damascius on this point, *In Parm*. II 24, 10–12.
[58] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 14 Wear.
[59] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 13 Wear.
[60] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 23 Wear.
[61] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 25 Wear.

Iamblichus adds, moreover, that some souls have a greater number of descents than others and that this repetition weakens souls.[62]

With regard to the doctrine of the vehicle of the soul, Syrianus reconciles the opinions of Porphyry,[63] that the vehicle dissolves, and Iamblichus, that the vehicle survives, by postulating a higher and lower *ochēma*: while the higher *ochēma* is immortal, the lower one dissolves. Proclus does not adopt this theory, conflating the two *ochēmata* into one which is made of different elements and three envelopes.

Matter and Evil

Syrianus' doctrine on evil, reproduced by Proclus in his treatise *De Malorum Subsistentia*, makes three points regarding evil: 1) that which we often consider evil in our partial universe is good with respect to the whole; 2) essential evil cannot exist, as all being participates in the good; 3) evil can exist in a limited sort of sense, in so far as degrees of nothingness get into the good.[64] Syrianus approaches the problem by first arguing that evil exists with respect to particular beings. Syrianus says that just as God relates to us in a different way from how we relate to each other, so do the things that appear evil to us appear good to God. Moreover, the things that do appear evil to us on the level of partial beings are actually good on the level of the whole (καὶ τὸ τῷ μεν μέρει κακόν, τῷ δε παντί καὶ τοῖς ὅλοις οὐ κακόν, ἀλλ' ἀγαθόν). Syrianus argues that the problem is with limited human perspective, rather than divine goodness. This idea appears in Proclus' *De Malorum Subsistentia*, 58.35–36 and 61.18.

While his predecessors connected evil with matter because evil exists without being (and hence, without a participation in the Good), Syrianus dismisses the idea of an Absolute Evil, for the Demiurge made everything good. Instead, he agrees with Iamblichus' concept of the *parhypostasis*, an entity that latches on to another entity and feeds off of it for survival.[65] He argues that evil is a *parhypostasis* in so far as it attaches to matter because it has no absolute form or identity of its own.

---

[62] Proclus, *In Crat*. cxvii.
[63] Proclus, *In Tim*. fr. 23 Wear; Augustine, *Civ. Dei*. X.19.
[64] Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 9 Wear.
[65] Reported in Simplicius, *In Cat*. 418, 15.

A Note on Syrianus' Exegesis of the Parmenides

Syrianus saw the subject of the *Parmenides* as theological and gave the work a metaphysical reading set apart from many earlier readings. The influence of Syrianus' interpretation of the *Parmenides* on Proclus cannot be overstated; on this matter, C. Steel has said "What [Proclus] owes to Syrianus is above all the general principles for consistent theological interpretation of the dialectical discussion on the One, which concludes the dialogue."[66] To those interpreting the *Parmenides* prior to Syrianus, Proclus attributes the following readings: there are those who approach the *Parmenides* as a dialectical exercise;[67] those who give an ontological interpretation, focusing on the One Intelligible Being; and those who give a henological interpretation. Of those who give the text a metaphysical reading, some say that the subject of the *Parmenides* is Being;[68] others hold that it is One-Being;[69] while Syrianus' view is a modification of Iamblichus, qualified: Syrianus argues that Parmenides discusses Being and all beings, in so far as all beings are the product of the One.[70] Thus, Syrianus developed a theological interpretation of the second hypothesis, which had previously, for the most part, been attributed to intellect.[71]

The structure of the *Parmenides*, including the number of hypotheses it outlines, as well as their subject matter, was a topic of debate among interpreters of the dialogue. Syrianus identifies nine hypotheses, stating that the first hypothesis is about the absolute God, and the second, the intelligible world. With this description, he introduced a change from Iamblichus, who said that the first hypothesis was about God and the gods and the second, intellectual and intelligible beings; instead, Syrianus seems to have returned to the first and second hypotheses, as identified by Amelius, Porphyry, and Plutarch.[72] However, in opposition to Porphyry and Iamblichus, but like his master Plutarch, he identifies the first five

---

[66] Steel (2009) 202.

[67] Proclus, *In Parm*. 630.37–633.12; these interpreters suggest that the *Parmenides* was an *antigraphe* against Zeno.

[68] Proclus, *In Parm*., 635.31–638.2. It is possible that Origen is the author of this doctrine, as he held that the One is without existence and substance—with Intellect as the highest principle, absolute Being and absolute One are identical.

[69] Proclus, *In Parm*. 638.14–640.16.

[70] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 1 Wear.

[71] Steel (2009) 203.

[72] Amelius (1052.31–1035.35) said that the first hypothesis was about the One, the second, about Intellect; Porphyry (1053.38–1054.37) identified the first as the primal God, the second as Intelligible. Plutarch (1058.21–1061.20) identifies the first and second hypotheses as God and Intellect, respectively.

positive ones ("if the One is") with distinct levels of reality and the following four with negative conclusions from the proposition "if the One is not." Syrianus' greatest contribution is the doctrine that what is asserted of the One in the first hypothesis is asserted of it in the second presents us with a full panorama of levels of divinity.[73] In 1062.10–1066.17 he describes this relationship between the hypotheses:

> "… all things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of being; and also the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics."[74]

The hypotheses are connected to one another in such a way as to describe a complete, unified cosmos.

Proclus adopts Syrianus' relationship between the first and second hypotheses, as well as his outline for the nine hypotheses of the *Parmenides*.[75] He lists nine hypotheses (5 positive, 4 negative) (1040.1–19):

1st: relationship of the One superior to Being to itself and other things
2nd: One coordinate with Being
3rd: One inferior to Being to itself and other things
4th: relationship of others which participate in the One to themselves and to the One
5th: the relations the others which do not participate in the One have to themselves and to the One
6th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of existing in one way and not in another, to itself and to other things
7th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of absolute non-existence, towards itself and others
8th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as non-existent) in the sense of existing in one way and not in another
9th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as absolutely non-existent)

[73] See *PT* 1, 11 where Proclus praises Syrianus for corresponding the negations in the first hypothesis and the affirmations in the second.
[74] Trans. Morrow-Dillon (1987).
[75] Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 2 Wear.

One can only assume that these nine hypotheses are the same as Syrianus', as Proclus only lists the first five of Syrianus'. Syrianus' subject of the third hypothesis, on souls assimilated to gods, relates to previous commentators' identification of the third hypothesis;[76] Proclus does not seem to adopt this subject from his teacher, preferring to keep the subjects of the hypotheses focused on relationships to the One.

D. *Problems of Methodology and Notes on Syrianus' Methodology*

While it is clear that Proclus adopts the bulk of his metaphysics from his teacher, it is difficult to sort through precisely what in his thought is purely Syrianic and what is his own elaboration of Syrianus' teaching. First of all, "fragment", as a term used in this work could better be replaced by the more accurate "testimonium." The selections of Syrianus given in this collection as numbered fragments are testimonia, or reports, taken from Proclus' commentaries on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*. The passages from Proclus and Damascius were gathered from sections where they explicitly mention Syrianus with reference to either Plato's *Timaeus* or *Parmenides*. Such a "fragment" collection, thus, poses the difficulty that the teachings of Syrianus as gathered from Proclus and Damascius are all non-verbatim, and possibly, as we shall see, based on oral teachings, for the most part, rather than written commentaries. It is difficult, thus, to know for certain how much of Proclus' or Damascius' own opinions on philosophy are included in their reports of Syrianus.

In addition, the work presented here attempts to determine Syrianus' metaphysics based on the fragments of his teaching on the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* found in the writings of Proclus and Damascius. Although I hope to expand this fragment collection at a later point, for now, commentaries on the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* have been selected because they were considered to be the summit of philosophical thought by members of the Athenian School of Platonism. Iamblichus, who proposed the order of study at the Academy for Platonic dialogues,[77] remarked on the importance of the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*:

---

[76] Amelius makes the subject of the third hypothesis rational souls, the fourth irrational souls; Iamblichus identifies the subject of the third as the superior beings, the fourth as rational souls, and the fifth as secondary souls; Plutarch of Athens, Syrianus' predecessor, identifies the third hypothesis as Soul.

[77] *Prolegomena Philosophiae Platonicae*, 219.24–29: "We relate what the divine Iamblichus did. Now he divided all the dialogues into twelve, some of which he termed

> "For indeed the divine Iamblichus is quite right in saying that the whole theory of Plato is contained in these two dialogues, the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*; for the whole philosophic treatment of the things in the cosmos and above the cosmos has its best culmination in them, and no level (or system) of beings has been left uninvestigated."[78]

For the most part, I stay within the confines of Proclus and Damascius' commentaries on the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*; these authors are especially important to our understanding of Syrianus' thought: Proclus, because he was the favorite pupil of Syrianus and disseminated his thought with little overt contradiction, and Damascius, because his works were, in turn, a commentary on Proclus. Syrianus' fragments on the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* (1–10), are taken from Proclus' reports regarding his teacher's opinions on various matters, which he makes in his *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* commentaries. The last six fragments of Syrianus' teachings on the *Parmenides* (fr. 11–15) are taken from Damascius' *Commentary on the Parmenides* and *On First Principles*. Fragments found in other texts, particularly those in Proclus' *Platonic Theology*, are discussed in the commentary on the selected fragments. Additionally, these fragments are a fine example of Syrianus' influential commentary style, in so far as he uses the method of providing a lemma for commenting.[79]

Setting the parameters of a fragment proved difficult and may elicit some debate. Proclus alerts us to Syrianus' opinion on a given matter by referring to the opinion of "ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών", "ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος", or "πατήρ". Unlike Simplicius, however, who alerts the reader that he is taking a direct account of Syrianus' teaching, Proclus does not change his vocabulary or syntax to indicate that he is quoting Syrianus directly.[80] Other philosophers are frequently mentioned by name in the

---

physical, and others theological; again he reduced the twelve to two, the *Timaeus and the Parmenides*, the *Timaeus* as head of the physical and the *Parmenides* as head of the theological dialogues." Trans. O'Neill (1965). The *Proleg. Phil. Plat* next lists the ten dialogues (in order of when they should first be read and studied): *Alcibiades* (its subject being knowledge of the self), *Gorgias, Phaedo, Cratylus, Theaetetus, Phaedrus, Symposium*, and *Philebus* (its subject matter being the Good), followed by the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides* (*Proleg.* 24–26). These dialogues were arranged to proceed on a plane corresponding to the progress of mind. Westerink argues for the addition of the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*, between *Tht.* and *Phdr.* See Westerink (1977) 15. Proclus, *In Alc.* 11, 11, credits Iamblichus also with deeming the ten dialogues to contain the foundation for Plato's philosophy.

[78] Trans. Dillon (1973). Iamblichus, *In Tim*, fr. 1 Dillon (Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 13, 14).

[79] Baltussen (2008) 158.

[80] See Baltussen (2008) 161. Here, Baltussen shows how Simplicus' signals a near-quotation of Syrianus' words by changing vocabulary and style.

Timaeus Commentary, although in the *Parmenides* commentary Proclus does not give his other authorities any such designation, but discusses the opinions of "one group" of commentators, as opposed to "another".[81] It is, however, possible to work out who Proclus is discussing based on what we know about the content of a commentator's philosophy. Dillon points out that in Books VI and VII of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*, Proclus frequently discusses commentators on a given passage using the sequence of Porphyry—Iamblichus—Syrianus.[82] While only the last commentator is mentioned by name, one can gather from context that the previous two are indeed Syrianus' chief predecessors. The fragments taken from Damascius' works refer to Proclus as "the commentator", but mention Syrianus by name. While in some of Damascius' commentaries he refers to Proclus and Syrianus without distinguishing between the two,[83] in the fragments selected this tendency did not arise. Unlike Proclus, who is often not explicit about the author of philosophical opinions he discusses, Damascius tends to name Proclus, Iamblichus, and Syrianus and is straightforward when it comes to comparing the three. Damasicus, moreover, tends to give a more critical assessment of his predecessor than does Proclus. One problem that does arise, however, is that Damascius seems to introduce his own metaphysics, somewhat unconsciously, perhaps, into his description of Syrianus' metaphysics.

Once a given "fragment" taken from Proclus or Damascius' commentaries is identified as a fragment, the next step consists in determining where the fragment begins and ends. While the identification of a fragment's beginning is, of course, clear—fragments begin when Proclus or Damascius name or refer to Syrianus and then discuss his opinion—, where a fragment leaves off is somewhat less clear, at least with respect to fragments found in Proclus' commentaries. Generally, Proclus relays his teacher's view on a topic, which then dissolves into his own commentary. When Proclus assimilates his own view to that of Syrianus, he does not make a point of it. Sometimes a break in the text exists between the teacher and student marked by phrases such as "I believe" or "I think", which indicate where Proclus begins his own commentary, but more often than not, change from a report on Syrianus' teaching to Proclus'

---

[81] One exception is Plutarch, who he denotes his "spiritual grandfather" (ὁ ἡμέτερος προπάτωρ) in *In Parm.* 1058, 22.

[82] Dillon (1988).

[83] Damascius, *In Phil.*, 5.1–2; 33.5; Olympiodorus is also guilty of this: *In Phd*, 9.5.1 and 10.3.19.

own opinion is noted by no more than a move from indirect to direct speech. Other, more subtle, changes sometimes occur, and these are indicated in my commentary on individual fragments. It is impossible, however, to select the exact instances where Proclus takes over his teacher's opinion, but does not acknowledge Syrianus.[84]

One indicator that Proclus assimilated his own opinion to Syrianus' teaching was his use of γάρ with direct speech: this construction was used when Proclus appropriated Syrianus' opinion, fully agreeing with it. When Proclus makes a slight correction to Syrianus' teaching, he tends to use γάρ with the accusative and infinitive (indirect speech) to show that he is reporting his teacher's opinion. This "γάρ hypothesis", used by Dillon when he collected Iamblichus' fragments,[85] is tested further when Proclus disagrees with the opinions of other Platonists. For instance, in Syrianus *In Tim*. fr. 25 Wear, Proclus uses γάρ with indirect speech to show that he disagrees with Theodore and Plutarch of Athens, who argue that the first birth is the single descent of souls into generation. For other examples, see notations made in individual fragments where either direct speech or indirect speech appear.

While use of direct or indirect speech, moreover, provides some insight into the appropriation of teaching, use of the imperfect sheds light on its transmission. In several instances, Proclus introduces Syrianus' opinion with "ἐλέγεν".[86] Use of the imperfect may indicate that the teaching was delivered orally. This method is certainly in accord with other evidence concerning teaching in the Platonic School under Syrianus, who is noted, along with his predecessor, Plutarch of Athens, for not having written commentaries, but preferring to leave the writing to his students. In Marinus' *Life of Proclus*, Marinus says that students were expected to copy lecture notes and provide their own commentaries.[87] In the Platonic school, particularly in Alexandria, commentaries were often marked by the formulaic phrase "*apo phonês*", followed by the master's name and the name of the student auditor/copyist.[88] Hermeias' *On the Phaedrus*, for example, is a compilation of notes taken *apo phonês* from Syrianus' lecture on the *Phaedrus*.[89] Another instance of a student recording his

[84] Olympiodorus accuses Proclus of doing just this in *In Phd*. 9.2.8–10.
[85] Dillon (1973).
[86] See Syrianus, *In Tim*. frs. 4, 5, 8, 10, 13, 18, 24, and 25 Wear.
[87] Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 13.
[88] Richard (1950) 192.
[89] For a discussion of details of this text which feature characteristics of a lecture and discussion, see Saffrey-Westerink (1981) xxxi.

teacher's lectures occurs in Proclus' *Platonic Theology*, I.10 ff., where Proclus notes that unwritten doctrines sometimes had written conclusions based on them.[90] In Marinus' *Life of Proclus*, Marinus discusses the mode of teaching in the Athenian school, as well as the manner of commentary-making:

> "In less than two whole years, he read with [Syrianus] the entire works of Aristotle, logical, ethical, political, physical and the science of theology which transcends these. Once he had received sufficient direction in these, as in certain preliminary and lesser mysteries, Syrianus directed him the mystagogy of Plato, in due sequence, and not, as the oracle says, 'putting his foot across the threshold', and caused him to behold the truly divine rites in Plato's work, with the unclouded eyes of the soul and the spotless vision of the mind. Working day and night with tireless discipline and care, and writing down what was said in a comprehensive yet discriminating manner, Proclus made such progress in a short time that, when he was still in his twenty-eighth year, he wrote a great many treatises, which were elegant and teeming with knowledge, especially the one on the *Timaeus*. In the course of these pursuits, his character also gained in beauty, acquiring the virtues along with knowledge."[91]

Here, Marinus reports how Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus* was written based on Syrianus' instruction.[92] Proclus and Syrianus first read together writings of Aristotle and Plato, which Proclus then transmitted to writing in the form of a summary, to which he inserted his own opinions. In Sheppard's opening section of the sixth essay of Proclus' *Commentary on the Republic*, the description of Proclus' method of commentary-making in that particular passage is useful as one example of Proclus' method.[93] She delineates four stages of how a commentary was produced by Proclus, based on Proclus' description of the occasion for his 6th essay on the *Republic* in *In Remp*. 69.29 ff. The steps are scattered throughout the report; however, Sheppard arranged them in the

---

[90] Proclus, *PT* I, 10, p. 42, 9 ff. Saffrey-Westerink (1968): "But our guide to the truth concerning the gods and 'bosom companion' (*oaristês*) of Plato, to borrow a term from Homer [cf. *Od*. 19. 179], having changed what was indeterminate in theory of the ancients into definiteness, and transforming their confusion of diverse ranks of being into a state of intellectual distinctiveness, both in his oral discourses and in his treatises on these subjects, has urged us to maintain the division of these conclusions in accordance with their natural articulation, in order to apply them to the divine orders."

[91] Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 13. trans. Edwards.

[92] It is uncertain whether Syrianus wrote a commentary on the *Republic*. See Proclus, *In Remp*. II 64.6 ff. and II 318.3 ff., where Proclus refers to a possible commentary on the *Republic* by Syrianus.

[93] Sheppard (1980) 43.

following logical manner: 1) a lecture by Syrianus (71.3), 2) discussions of Proclus and Syrianus on the lecture (71.26–27), 3) a lecture by Proclus, in this case, on the occasion of Plato's birthday (69.23),[94] and 4) the transmission of this lecture to written form comprises the sixth essay on the *Republic* as it stands today. Thus, Syrianus' oral teaching was in the form of lectures on various topics, followed by discussions with Proclus.

This is not to say that all of Syrianus' teaching was unwritten. In Marinus' *Life of Proclus*, Marinus reports the following:

> "When I was reading the works of Orpheus in his presence, and hearing in his exegeses not only the thoughts of Iamblichus and Syrianus, but at the same time many others more germane to theology, I begged the philosopher not to leave such inspired poetry uninterpreted, but to write a more perfect commentary on this also. His reply was that he had often been eager to write, but had been categorically forbidden by certain visions. For he said that he had seen his own master restraining him with threats. Meditating another stratagem, therefore, I besought him to make a note of what he compiled, and when he had made his notes on the margin of the commentaries, we made a single collation of them all, and the result was that there were many lines of notes and comments by him on Orpheus, even if in the event he did not do this on the whole of the divine myth or on all the rhapsodies."[95]

It appears that Syrianus' teachings had been recorded, although not fully.[96] Proclus recorded the interpretations of Iamblichus and Syrianus on the Orphic writings in the form of scholia written on the margins of "his teacher's books" (possibly Proclus' lecture notes), which later formed Proclus' commentary on the Orphic writings. Proclus also refers to a monograph of Syrianus in which he interprets the myth of Zeus and Hera on Mt. Ida.[97] Proclus says that he excerpted this monograph and presented the selected passages in summarised form (133.7–10).

---

[94] Sheppard lists these steps with their location on the text in (1980) 32.

[95] Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 27. trans. Edwards.

[96] This is a bit odd, as teachings on the great mysteries of the Orphic hymns and *Chaldean Oracles* were just the sort of thing one may not want to record in writing. In his *Life of Proclus* 26, Marinus says that Proclus never studied the Orphic hymns with Syrianus, but instead studied Syrianus' commentary on the hymns. It appears that this commentary must have been written and that Proclus picked it up at a later date. It is possible that Syrianus wrote this commentary and it is also entirely possible that the commentary was written by another student, although, if the latter were true, that fact might have been indicated elsewhere.

[97] Proclus, *In Remp*. 132.13–133.4; see Sheppard on this passage (1980) 62.

There is also a possibility that Syrianus may have written commentaries on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*. Although Proclus does not explicitly mention such commentaries, it is possible that Damascius had access to commentaries by Syrianus. This possibility is discussed at *In Parm*. Frs. 12, 14a, and 15, below.

E. *Review of Scholarship*

There has been a flurry of recent secondary literature given to Syrianus, led by A. Longo's work on Syrianus' *Commentary on the Metaphysics*. Longo's *Siriano e i principi della scienza* (Naples, 2005) is a study of Syrianus's *Metaphysics* commentary, as are her articles "Le sostanze intermedie e le dimostrazioni astronomiche nel prologo del commento di Siriano sui libri M e N della 'Metafisica' di Aristotele" and "Siriano e i precedenti pre-aristotelici del principio della contraddizione" both in *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*, 2001 and 2004, respectively. Further, Longo, along with L. Corti, N. D'Andrès, D. Del Forno, E. Maffi, and A. Schmidhauser, edited the proceedings of a 2006 conference held in Geneva on Syrianus, *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité Tardive: Actes du Colloque International, Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009). This important collection contains twenty articles on aspects of Syrianus' metaphysics, with the bulk of the articles focusing on Syrianus on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and Syrianus' comments on the *Parmenides*. The articles that are especially noteworthy to this present study include, M. Frede, "Syrianus on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*," S. Klitenic Wear, "Syrianus' Teachings on the Soul", Steel, "Syrianus' Theological Interpretation of the *Parmenides*. The Time of the Divine Souls", Dillon, "The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe Revealed: Syrianus' Exegesis of the Second Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*", L. Van Campe, "Syrianus and Proclus on the Attributes of the One in Plato's *Parmenides*," J.-P. Schneider, "Les apories soulevées par Syrianus sur la thèse de l'identité de l'un et de l'être (Syrianus, *in metaph*., pp. 59, 16–60, 26)", O'Meara, "Le fondement du principe de non-contradiction chez Syrianus", and P. d'Hoine, "Le commentaire de Proclus sur le *Parmenide* comme source du Περὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν λόγος de Syrianus?" Another recent treatment of Syrianus' metaphysics appeared in *Classical Quarterly* in 2008 (58.2), Wear's "Syrianus the Platonist on Eternity and Time". I. Mueller has made an important contribution to the study of Syrianus' concept of mathematics in "Syrianus and the Concept of Mathemati-

cal Number", in G. Bechtle-O'Meara (edd.), *La Philosophie des Mathématiques de l'Antiquité Tardive*, Éditions universitaires (Fribourg, 2000). Here, Mueller argues that Syrianus makes mathematical units or "monads" the matter of number on which form is imposed.

A number of pertinent editions have been published in the last several years. Dillon and O'Meara recently published a much-needed translation of Syrianus' *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Syrianus, *On Aristotle's 'Metaphysics' 3–4 and 13–14* (Ithaca, 2006–2008). Steel has published a new edition of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides, Procli in Platonis 'Parmenidem' Commentaria, tomi I–II, libros I–V continentes* (Oxford, 2007–2008). H. Tarrant, D.T. Runia, M. Share, and D. Baltzly have published a translation, with introduction and extensive notes for Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus*, vols. I-III (Cambridge, 2007).

In the last ten years, the following major studies of Syrianus' metaphysics have been completed: C-P. Manolea's PhD thesis, *The Homeric Tradition in Syrianus*, which was awarded in 2002 by the University of London, was published in 2004 by Ant. Stamoulis Editions. The work is an engaging treatment of Syrianus' use of Homeric interpretation and sheds light on a number of metaphysical aspects of Syrianus' system, in addition to setting forth his method of exegesis. With regard to Syrianus' metaphysics, two key articles by C. D'Ancona and C. Luna were published in 2000 which outlined where Proclus has inherited Syrianic principles in his philosophy. The articles are part of "La doctrine des principes: Syrianus comme source textuelle et doctrinale de Proclus":[98] the first part, "1st Partie: Histoire du Probleme" is written by D'Ancona, and the second part, "2nd Partie: Analyse des Textes", by Luna. These studies focus on Syrianus' *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, especially with respect to his doctrine of *peras* and *apeiria*.

Other important research on Syrianus includes R.L. Cardullo's collection of Syrianus' fragments on Aristotle, as well as a number of articles on the subject of Syrianus' commentaries on Aristotle, published in 1986.[99] Sheppard's *Studies on the 5th and 6th Essays of Proclus' Commentary on the Republic*, published in 1980, includes a chapter, "Proclus' Debt to Syrianus", which attributes various aspects of Proclus' exegetical mode to Syrianus. The chapter proves helpful for study on metaphysics, moreover, because Sheppard analyses Homeric passages with respect to the

[98] Segonds (1986) and Steel (2000).
[99] Cardullo (1986) 112–124 and (1987) 71–181 and (1993) 107–214.

metaphysics which Syrianus claims the passages uncover. Sheppard discusses *peras* and *apeiria*, also, as the topic of her article "Monad and Dyad as Cosmic Principles in Syrianus," in H.J. Blumenthal and A.C. Lloyd, eds., *Soul and The Structure of Being in Late Neoplatonism. Syrianus, Proclus, and Simplicius* (Liverpool, 1982). In the first work, Sheppard investigates Syrianus' cosmology with respect to his harmonisation of poetry and theology. In the second, she investigates the importance of *peras* and *apeiria* in Syrianus' metaphysics.

Saffrey and Westerink have discussed Syrianus' contribution to Proclus' thought in their edition of the *Platonic Theology* (1968–1987): vol. III contains a discussion of his exegesis of the second hypothesis on the *Parmenides* (xl–lii); vols. IV (xxix–xxxvii) and VI (xx–xxviii) discuss Syrianus' exegesis on the *Phaedrus*.

H. Baltussen's book, *Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius: The Methodology of a Commentator* (2008) has enlightened several readings of individual fragments, particularly with respect to how Proclus introduces Syrianus' thought and evidence of the oral nature of Syrianus' teaching within Proclus' commentaries.

Ground-breaking research was conducted by both Dodds and Praechter over forty years ago on Syrianus. Dodds included a section on "Proclus and his Predecessors" (xviii–xxvi) in his introduction to *The Elements of Theology* (Oxford, 1963), where he notes several Syrianic innovations which Proclus adopts in his metaphysics. Praechter's survey of Syrianic thought in "Syrianos", in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klass. Altertumswissenschaft*, (1932) 4.A2, cols. 1728–1775 is a seminal work which provided a look into Syrianus' thought, especially with respect to his *Metaphysics Commentary*. This article surveys Syrianus' works, life, and philosophy, including his teaching on the Soul, Demiurge, and logic, among other topics. Praechter's 1910 article, "Richtungen und Schulen im Neuplatonismus", *Kleine Schriften*, ed. H. Dörrie, Collectanea, vol. VII, (Hildesheim-New York, 1973) contrasts major figures in later Neoplatonism (including, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Syrianus, and Proclus) on a number of issues. He traces Platonism from its roots in Plotinus and Porphyry to the Syrian and Athenian schools, the theurgic Platonism of Julian, up to Eastern and Western Christian Platonists. Such a tremendous survey is handled through a series of themes, including modes of textual interpretation.

F. *Notes on Present Edition*

The translations of Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 1–25 Wear and *In Parm*. fr. 11–15 Wear are mine, while I have adopted Dillon and Morrow's translations of *Proclus' Commentary on the Parmenides* (Princeton, 1987) (hereafter, Morrow-Dillon) for Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 1–10 with negligible changes. The recent translations of Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus*, covering *In Tim*. I.1-II.102 (*In Tim*. frs. 1–16 Wear) by H. Tarrant, D. Runia, M. Share, and D. Baltzly (Cambridge, 2007–2009), unfortunately, were published after I had completed my translations. I was able to make use of these skilful translations during the revision period of this book, as noted throughout fragments 1–18. For the lemma for *In Tim*. frs. 1–25, I used R.G. Bury's translations of the *Timaeus* (Cambridge, 1989) and for the lemma for fragments *In Parm*. 1–9, I used Morrow-Dillon's translations, for *In Parm*. 10–15, I used H.N. Fowler's translation of the *Parmenides* (Cambridge, 1963).

For the Greek texts, I have used and reproduced the following: for Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 1–25 Wear, I have used E. Diehl's *In Platonis Timaeum Commentarii*, 3 vols (Leipzig, 19-3-1906.) For Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 1–10 Wear, I used Proclus, *Procli in Platonis 'Parmenidem' Commentaria*, vols. I–III, ed. Steel (Oxford, 2007–2009) For Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 11–14 Wear, I used Damascius, *Traité des Premiers Principes* vol. 1–3, ed. Westerink and J. Combès (Paris, 1986) and Damascius, *Commentaire du Parménide de Platon*, vols. 1–3 ed. Westerink and Combès (Paris, 1997). For Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 15 Wear, I used Ruelle, *Damascii Dubitationes et Solutiones. De primis principiis In Parmenidem* (Paris, 1889).

The following terms have been capitalised throughout the work: cosmic entities (including Soul, Being, Limit, Demiurge, etc.), as well as "Teacher" and "Master", when the reference is to Syrianus.

FRAGMENTS

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 20.27–23.2

Εἷς, δύο, τρεῖς· ὁ δὲ δὴ τέταρτος ἡμῖν, ὦ φίλε Τίμαιε, ποῦ τῶν χθὲς δαιτυμόνων, τὰ νῦν δὲ ἑστιατόρων; [*Tim.* 17 A]

ἃ δὲ ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμὼν ἐν τούτοις ἐπέκρινε, ταῦτα ἡμῖν ῥητέα τῷ Πλάτωνι διαφερόντως ἑπόμενα. ἔλεγε δ' οὖν, ὅτι ὅσῳ αἱ ἀκροάσεις περὶ σεμνοτέρων γίγνονται καὶ ὑψηλοτέρων πραγμάτων, τοσούτῳ τὸ μὲν τῶν ἀκροατῶν ἐλασσοῦται πλῆθος, μυστικώτερον δὲ καὶ ἀπορρητότερον πρόεισιν ὁ λόγος. καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἐν μὲν τῇ προτέρᾳ τῆς πολιτείας παραδόσει κατὰ τὴν ἐν Πειραιεῖ ξυνουσίαν πολὺς ὁ ἀκροατής, καὶ οἵ γε ὀνόματος τυχόντες ἕξ· ἐν δὲ τῇ δευτέρᾳ κατὰ τὴν Σωκράτους ἀφήγησιν τέτταρες οἱ δεχόμενοι τοὺς λόγους· ἐν δὲ ταύτῃ καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἀπολείπεται, τρεῖς δὲ οἱ ἀκροαταί, καὶ ὅσῳ καθαρώτερος[a] καὶ νοερώτερος ὁ λόγος, τοσούτῳ συστέλλεται ὁ ἀκροατής.

πανταχοῦ μὲν γὰρ ἡ ὑφηγουμένη μονάς[b] ἐστιν· ἀλλ' ὅπου μὲν ἀγωνιστικῶς· διὸ καὶ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ τό τε ἀόριστον ἔχουσι καὶ τὸ διωρισμένον εἰς πλῆθος ἐκτεινόμενον, ἐν ᾧ τὸ περιττὸν τῷ ἀρτίῳ συμπέπλεκται[c]· ὅπου δὲ ἀφηγηματικῶς[d] μέν, οὔπω ⟨δ'⟩[e] ἀπηλλαγμένης τῆς μάχης καὶ τῶν ἀγώνων τῶν διαλεκτικῶν· διὸ καὶ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ τέτταρες, τῆς τετράδος διὰ μὲν τὸ τετραγωνικὸν καὶ τὸ πρὸς τὴν μονάδα συγγενὲς τὴν ὁμοιότητα καὶ τὸ ταὐτὸν ἐχούσης, διὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ ἀρτίου φύσιν τὴν ἑτερότητα καὶ τὸ πλῆθος· ⟨ὅπου δὲ⟩ ἐξῃρημένης μὲν ἁπάσης ἀγωνιστικῆς διδασκαλίας, ἀποφαντικῶς δὲ καὶ ὑφηγητικῶς τῆς θεωρίας ὑφαινομένης· διὸ καὶ ἡ τριὰς οἰκεία τοῖς ὑποδεχομένοις αὐτήν, κατὰ πάντα τῇ μονάδι συμφυομένη, τὸ περιττόν, τὸ πρῶτον, τὸ τέλειον· ὡς γὰρ τῶν ἀρετῶν αἱ μὲν ἐν μαχομένοις ὑφεστήκασι καὶ μετροῦσιν αὐτῶν τὴν μάχην, αἱ δὲ χωρίζουσι μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν μαχομένων, οὔπω δὲ αὐτῶν

[a] **καὶ νοερώτερος** om M [b] **γὰρ ὑφηγουμένη ⟨ἡ⟩ μονάς** ci Kroll [c] **συμπλέκεται** P [d] **ὑφηγηματικῶς** N[e] δ' add Kroll

One, two, three—but where, my dear Timaeus, is the fourth of our guests of yesterday, our hosts of today?

But we should relate the judgement of our Master on this question, since it accords particularly well with the doctrine of Plato. He said then, that in so much as the expositions concern more holy and exalted matters, in corresponding measure the number of pupils is diminished and the discourse proceeds in a manner more secret and more ineffable. And for this reason, in the first description of the state, during the gathering in the Piraeus, the audience was large; as regards named people, it amounted to six. In the second, in Socrates' narration, those listening to his words were four. But in this present discussion, the fourth person drops out, and the listeners are three, and so to the extent that the discourse is more pure and intellective, so the audience is reduced further.

For the expository element[1] is in all cases a monad: on the first occasion, however, he proceeds in a mode of contention, and for this reason the listeners are characterised both by indeterminacy and by division into multiplicity, in which the odd is interwoven with the even. On the second occasion, he proceeds through narration, but not apart from contention and the combat of dialectic, and on this account, the auditors are four, since the tetrad by reason of its squareness and its affinity to the monad, possesses likeness and sameness, but on the other hand, on account of its evenness, it possesses otherness and multiplicity. On the third occasion, all contentious teaching is eliminated and the exposition is in consequence characterized by straight exposition and instruction. For this reason, the triad is suitable to the nature of those receiving it, since according to every aspect it is of like nature with the monad, being characterized by the odd, primacy and perfection. For even as among the virtues, some are meant for contention and bestow measurement on the contentious and others are meant to separate out the contentious

[1] Tarrant translates "expository element" as "number in charge" (2007) 115.

παντελῶς ἀπέστησαν, αἳ δὲ πάντη κεχωρισμέναι τυγχάνουσιν, οὕτω δὴ καὶ τῶν λόγων οἳ μὲν ἀγωνιστικοί τινές εἰσιν, οἳ δὲ ἀποφαντικοί, οἳ δὲ μέσοι πως ἀμφοτέρων· οἳ μὲν τῇ νοερᾷ γαλήνῃ καὶ τῇ νοήσει τῆς ψυχῆς προσήκοντες, οἳ δὲ ταῖς δοξαστικαῖς ἐνεργείαις, οἳ δὲ ταῖς μεταξὺ τούτων ζωαῖς. καὶ δὴ καὶ τῶν ἀκροατῶν οἳ μὲν πρὸς τὰς ὑψηλοτέρας ἀκροάσεις ἔχουσι συμμέτρως, οἳ δὲ πρὸς τὰς χαμαιζηλοτέρας. καὶ οἱ μὲν τῶν μειζόνων ἀκροαταὶ καὶ πρὸς τὰς καταδεεστέρας ἁπάντων οἷοί τέ εἰσιν, οἱ δὲ πρὸς τὰς ἐλάττους πεφυκότες ἀδυνατοῦσι πρὸς τὰς σεμνοτέρας. οὕτω καὶ τῶν ἀρετῶν ὁ μὲν τὰς μείζους ἔχων ἔχει καὶ τὰς ἐλάττους, ὁ δὲ ταῖς ὑφειμέναις κοσμηθεὶς οὐ πάντως καὶ τῶν τελειοτέρων ἐπήβολος γέγονε.

τί οὖν ἔτι θαυμαστόν, εἰ ὁ τῶν περὶ πολιτείας λόγων ἠκροαμένος ἀπολέλειπται τῆς περὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἀκροάσεως; μᾶλλον δὲ πῶς οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον ἐν τοῖς βαθυτέροις τῶν λόγων ἐλάττους εἶναι τοὺς παρεπομένους; πῶς δὲ οὐ Πυθαγόρειον τὸ διάφορα μέτρα τῶν ἀκροάσεων ἀφωρίσθαι; καὶ γὰρ τῶν εἰς τὸ ὁμακόειον[a] φοιτώντων οἳ μὲν βαθυτέρων, οἳ δὲ ἐπιπολαιοτέρων ἥπτοντο δογμάτων. πῶς δὲ οὐ τῷ Πλάτωνι σύμφωνον ἀσθένειαν αἰτιασαμένῳ τῆς ἀπουσίας; ἡ γὰρ ἀδυναμία τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς τὰ θειότερα νοήματα τῶν ὑψηλοτέρων ἡμᾶς ἀφίστησι συνουσιῶν· ὅπου δὴ χώραν ἔχει καὶ τὸ ἀκούσιον· ἑκούσιον μὲν γὰρ πᾶν τὸ μειζόνως ἡμᾶς ὠφελοῦν, ἡ δὲ τῶν τελεωτέρων ἀπόπτωσις ἀκούσιον· μᾶλλον δὲ αὕτη μὲν οὐχ ἑκούσιον, ἡ δὲ οὐ μόνον ἀποστᾶσα τῶν μειζόνων ἀγαθῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὴν ἀπειρίαν ὑπενεχθεῖσα τῆς κακίας ἀκούσιον.

διὸ καὶ ὁ Τίμαιος οὐχ ἑκόντα φησὶν ἀπολείπεσθαι τῆσδε τῆς συνουσίας τόν τέταρτον· οὐ γὰρ οὕτως ἀπολέλειπται, ὡς ἀπόστροφος πάντη θεωρίας, ἀλλ' ὡς τὰ μείζω μυεῖσθαι μὴ δυνάμενος. τὸν μὲν οὖν τῶν περὶ κοσμοποιίας λόγων ἀκροατὴν καὶ τῶν περὶ πολιτείας ἀκροᾶσθαι δυνατόν, τὸν δὲ τῶν ⟨περὶ⟩ πολιτείας ἀνασχόμενον διὰ δυνάμεως ὑπερβολὴν ἀπολείπεσθαι τῶν περὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἀκροάσεων τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἐστί. δι' ἔνδειαν ἄρα καὶ οὐ δι' ὑπεροχήν, ὥς φασί

[a] **εἰς τὸ** om M **ὁμοκόειον** M| cf. Iambl. uit. Pyth. 30 cum add. Nauckii.

elements, but they are not entirely free from them, while others again are completely separated, so among discourses, some are agonistic, others are purely expository, while others are intermediate between the two. Some are proper to the intellective calm and to the intellectual activity of the soul, but others are related to the activities of the opinionative faculty, still others with the levels of life intermediate between the two. And then, among the listeners, some are more suitable for loftier lessons, but others to the more low-grade lessons. And those listeners capable of taking in the loftier doctrines are able to deal also with the lower, but those who by nature are adapted to the lesser are unable to grasp the more serious doctrines. And so, among the virtues, he who possesses the higher also has the lesser, but he who is adorned with the lower virtues, is not entirely in all cases fitted to the more perfect.

What wonder is it then if someone who was an auditor of the discourses on the state is left out of the lecture on the universe? Or rather, how is it not necessary that in the more profound of the discourses the auditors are fewer? And how is the difference in the quantity of auditors at the various sessions not a Pythagorean trait? For among those who attend the lecture-hall of the Pythagoreans, some are able to grasp the profound, but others the more superficial teachings. And how does it not accord with Plato to give as a reason for absence an illness? For the incapacity of the soul with regard to more divine concepts keeps us away from loftier discourses. And thus even the involuntary has a place. For the voluntary is everything which gives us benefit in more important respects, but the falling away from what is more perfect is involuntary—or rather this fall is not voluntary, but that which not only separates us from the better goods, but actually is borne away to the unlimitedness of evil is involuntary.

It is for this reason, then, that Timaeus says that the fourth is absent from the conversation "not voluntarily". Thus he is not absent, as being completely turned away from contemplation, but simply in not being able to be initiated into the higher mysteries. Thus, the idea that the auditor of the discourses of the creation of the world is able to attend to discourses on politics, but the auditor of discourses on politics is perhaps absent through an excess of power,[2] from discourses on the universe, is quite impossible. It is through lack of force and not through superiority,

[2] "διὰ δυνάμεωσ ὑπερβολήν" (22.3) seems to be Iamblichus' description (19.20). Cf. Festugière's note, (1966) 51, note 1.

τινες, ὁ τέταρτος ἀπολέλειπται τῶν προκειμένων λόγων, καὶ τὴν ἀσθένειαν οὐ τῶν ἄλλων πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀσυμμετρίαν, ἀλλ᾽ αὐτοῦ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους ὕφεσιν ῥητέον· ἔστω μὲν γάρ ἡ ἀδυναμία καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ κατιόντων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀναγομένων ἐκ τῆς θεωρίας τῶν αἰσθητῶν, οἵαν ὁ ἐν Πολιτείᾳ Σωκράτης [VII 518 AB] ἱστόρησεν· ἀλλ᾽ ὁ τῶν πολιτικῶν λόγων ἀκροατὴς γεγονὼς οὐκ ἂν δι᾽ ὑπεροχὴν ἄγνωστον τοῖς παροῦσιν ἀπολείποιτο τῆς τῶν φυσικῶν θεωρίας.

Commentary

Proclus provides an interpretation of *Timaeus* 17 A in which Socrates asks his friend Critias and his two guests, Timaeus of Locri and Hermocrates of Syracuse, for the whereabouts of a fourth unnamed guest: "One, two, three, where's the fourth?" The four had attended Socrates' exposition on the ideal constitution the previous day. Before we arrive at Syrianus' metaphysical interpretation of the missing fourth, Proclus runs through the opinions of previous interpreters of the *Timaeus*: namely, that of Porphyry, Iamblichus, and the grammarians.

Porphyry gives an "ethical" interpretation to the text (19.1–9),[4] in so far as he draws various ethical lessons. Iamblichus is named next (19.9–30) and he is reported to have given a metaphysical interpretation of the *Timaeus* 17 A 4. Proclus cites Iamblichus as saying that the absent guest is skilled in contemplating intelligible reality, and is thus unsuited for concerning himself with the sensible world. Iamblichus criticizes Porphyry's moral, "political", interpretation because the *Timaeus* is a physical dialogue (19.27). Iamblichus's criticism of Porphyry is given as an indirect quotation (introduced with a participle, rather than an infinitive) and it seems that the above Porphyry passage may have been taken from Iamblichus, although the Porphyry passage does not contain implicit criticism.

[4] On salient features of Neoplatonic exegesis, see Praechter (1973) 185 ff.

as some say, that the fourth is absent from the present discussion, and one must declare that the "sickness" is not due to the others' lack of symmetry with him, but to his inferiority to others. Let us grant that there is incapacity both for those descending from the intelligible and for those being led up from the contemplation of material things, as Socrates reports in the *Republic* (VII 518 AB). But whoever is the auditor of lessons on political matters would not be absent from the teaching on physics on account of an excess of power, which was unknown to those present.[3]

[3] Line 23.4 includes οἶμαι, thus concluding Syrianus' portion of the commentary and beginning Proclus' own opinion.

The next group of interpreters listed (though prior historically) are the grammarians, whom Proclus praises for bringing difficulties to the reader's attention. The primary interest of this group is identifying the missing fourth by name, and they proceed with an historical/literal interpretation of the text. Aristocles of Rhodes (20.2–7) proposes that the absent one is Theaetetus, but Proclus argues that Theaetetus was ill in a different dialogue, hardly grounds for making him the absent party in this one (20.15). Ptolemy the Platonist (20.7–9) identified the missing guest with Cleitophon, a suggestion Proclus calls "absurd" (20.18–21): Socrates reports that Cleitophon at the time of the discussion had returned from his journey to the Piraeus, so he certainly could not have attended. Dercyllides (20.9–11) thinks that the missing one is Plato himself, who had been absent during the time of Socrates' death, as noted in the *Phaedo* (59B). As with Aristocles of Rhodes' suggestion, Proclus argues that the dates of Plato's supposed absence and Socrates' death do not accord (20.15). Proclus prefers Atticus' identification of the missing person as one of a number of Timaeus' companions (20.21–27). Socrates asks Timaeus where the fourth is and it is Timaeus who makes the excuses. Timaeus' response, according to Atticus, makes it clear that the absence is forced and involuntary.

The account of Syrianus' view that follows is a return to Iamblichus' metaphysical interpretation. The fragment is quite extensive (20.27–23.2) and introduces four topics: Platonic paedagogy; numerology; the grades of virtue; and the concept of voluntary and involuntary. To the Platonic mind, these topics are interdependent. By reading Platonic theological

texts properly, the soul becomes ordered and able to live according to virtue;[5] likewise, the numbers themselves contain the principles for an ethical life.[6] All of these concepts, in turn, reveal demiurgic activity, as both the numbers and the virtues of the soul constitute an ethical cosmology.

Before elaborating on the particulars of Syrianus' fragment here, it is perhaps helpful to go over the connection between number and virtue in the Platonic school. Syrianus uses Pythagorean numerology to interpret the number of guests listening to the Socratic discourse. Pythagoreanism was widespread in the later Platonic schools,[7] and Syrianus seems to have been influenced by the works of Nicomachus of Gerasa, as well as Iamblichus' *Pythagorean Sequence*. Syrianus refers to the writings of both Iamblichus and Nicomachus[8] and he mentions two of Iamblichus' Pythagorean works, Περὶ τῆς Πυθαγορικῆς αἱρέσεως (*On the Pythagorean Sect* or *On Pythagoreanism*, as it is better known) and ἡ τῶν Πυθαγορείων δογμά των συναγωγή (*The Collection of Pythagorean Doctrines*).[9] Nicomachus' work is important for drawing parallels between mathematical and ethical principles. For Nicomachus, virtue lies in the mathematical mean:

> "For in the realm of the greater there arises excesses, overreaching, and superabundance, and in the less need, deficiency, privation, and lack; but in that which lies between the greater and the less, namely, the equal, are

[5] On this topic, see Coulter (1976).

[6] Mueller (2000) 71–84.

[7] For a general account of Pythagoreanism on this point, see O'Meara (1989).

[8] Syrianus, *In Met*. 103, 4–9:

Εἰ δέ τινι καὶ τῆς ἀνελίξεως καὶ διεξοδικωτέρας ὑφηγήσεως ὧν ἀνεγράψαμεν προβλημάτων ἔρως ἐνέστακται φιλομαθής, ἐντυχὼν οὗτος ταῖς τε Νικομάχου συναγωγαῖς τῶν Πυθαγορείων δογμάτων καὶ ταῖς τοῦ θείου Ἰαμβλίχου περὶ αὐτῶν τούτων πραγματείαις ἀποπλήσει τὸν ἔρωτα, τοῦ μεν ἱστορικῶς ἅπαντα καὶ φιλαλήθως ἀφηγουμένου, τοῦ δε κατασκευαῖς καὶ ἀποδείξεσι καὶ νοερωτέραις ἐπιβολαῖς αὐτὰ διακοσήσαντος.

Nicomachus of Gerasa was a contemporary of Numenius, best known for four works on mathematics, *Introduction to Arithmetic*, *Manual of Harmony*, *Geometrical Introduction*, and the *Theologoumena*. The last work assimilated theology and ethics with mathematics for an explanation of virtue. Syrianus refers to the title, *On Pythagoreanism* in *In Herm*. I 22, 4–5; *On the Collection of Pythagorean Doctrines* appears in *In Met*. 140, 15; 149, 30. There is a rather extensive list of commentaries on this work, from Iamblichus' important *In Nicomachi Arithmeticam Introductionem Liber*, to Cassiodorus and Isidore of Seville's versions, through the medium of Boethius' Latin version. See O'Meara (1989) 21.

[9] Syrianus refers to the title, *On Pythagoreanism* in *In Herm*. I 22, 4–5; *On the Collection of Pythagorean Doctrines* appears in *In Met*. 140, 15; 149, 30.

> virtues, health, moderation, propriety, beauty and the like, to which the aforesaid form of number, the perfect, is most akin." (I. 14.2)[10]

The mean refers to the Platonic and Aristotelian μετρίον as the virtuous measure between excessive qualities; e.g., courage is the mean between rashness and cowardice. Nicomachus places this understanding of virtue as moderation within the mathematical realm of the perfect number.[11] Numbers contain the code for virtuous conduct, with particular numbers representing particular virtues, such as "five" indicating justice.[12] These aspects of Nicomachean Pythagoreanism were adopted by Iamblichus,[13] who, following Nicomachus, placed theology as the stage following preparatory mathematics. Syrianus obtained his knowledge of Pythagorean arithmetic[14] through Iamblichus' *On Pythagoreanism*, book IV[15] and cites the *Sacred Discourses*, a book of Pythagorean theology attributed to Pythagoras.[16]

In 21.4–24, Syrianus gives an account of the cosmos based on Pythgaorean number theory.[17] He begins by saying that the audience during the previous day's talk on the ideal state amounted to six. The number six here refers to the Pythagorean arithmetical representation for the physical world, six being the total of the first even (two) multiplied by the first odd (three): here "odd is interwoven with the even." It is the first perfect

---

[10] ἐν μὲν γάρ τῷ πλείονι αἵ τε ὑπερβολαὶ καὶ ὑπερκπτώσεις καὶ περισσότηες γίνονται, ἔν δε τῷ ἐλάττονι αἱ ἔνδειαι καὶ ἔνδειαι καὶ ἐλλείψεις καὶ στερήσεις καὶ ὀλιγοεξίαι ἐν δε μετάξυ τοῦ πλέον καὶ τοῦ ἔλαττον κειμένω, ὅ ἔστιν ἴσῳ ἀρεται τε καὶ ὑγιεῖαι καὶ μετριότητες καὶ εὐπρέπειαι καὶ κάλλη καὶ τά ὅμοια. ὧν γενικώτατον τὸ λέχθεν τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ εἶδος τὸ τέλειον. Translation D'Ooge (1926) 207.

[11] Nicomachus, *Introduction*, I, 16, 1, 2. This alludes to Euclid's definition, *Elem*. VII, 22: "A perfect number is one that is equal to its own parts." For instance, Nicomachus tells us that six has the factors 3, 2, 1 and these added together make six. See *Introd*. I, 16, 2. D'Ooge (1926) 209.

[12] D'Ooge (1926) 106.

[13] Iamblichus' major commentary on Nicomachus' *Introduction to Arithmetic*, *On Pythagoreanism*, is divided into nine books. See the description of Iamblichus' use of Nicomachus in D'Ooge (1926) 125 ff., including the summary of Iamblichus' references to Nicomachus in his Commentary at p. 127.

[14] See O'Meara (1989) 130 on this topic, particularly for references.

[15] *On Pyth*. IV, 142, 15–25 = Iamblichus, *In Nic*. 10, 12–24; cf. Syrianus, *In Met*. 123, 6–9, 13 = 14 = Iamblichus, *In Nic*. 6, 20–22; Syrianus, *In Met*. 140, 9–10 = Iamblichus, *In Nic*. 11, 8–9.

[16] Syrianus, *In Met*. 140, 14–18; 10, 5; 123, 2; 175, 4.

[17] See Dillon-O'Meara (2008) 4, on the two kinds of mathematical numbers: one is monadic and made up of units, the other is substantial, and corresponds to form. Syrianus, *In Met*. 88, 7–9; 123, 19–20. On Pythagorean numbers and the creation of the universe, see Burkert (1972).

number, and was often identified with soul.[18] In Pythagorean cosmology, the active principle of the monad (which he mentions in the next line) acts on the number six as the physical universe and imposes definition on the indefinite.[19] By referring to the audience as the physical universe, Syrianus places the majority in the category of the unformed and hence uninitiated. At the time of the second narration, however, the audience has dropped to four. Syrianus likens the tetrad to the monad by its squareness, but finds it akin to multiplicity because of its evenness. The first members of the tetrad are the "monad itself" and "dyad itself", which contains the intellectual decad of forms.[20] This tetrad contains the intelligible decad of forms. Hence, the tetrad signifies a metaphysical rank just below the monad. Next, Syrianus calls the triad "suitable to the nature of those receiving it" as it is the mean: a combination of odd and even numbers. The triad is the most similar to the monad as a recombination of monads.[21] On a metaphysical level, it seems possible that this triad, that is most similar to a monad, could be the Iamblichean triad of Limit, Unlimitedness, and their combination. The henads act as the content of the combination of Limit and Unlimitedness, with the lowest level of the henadic world, being the highest of the noetic world. Iamblichus includes a monad and a dyad, as well as a triad containing the divine numbers which are unities.[22] Syrianus likewise speaks of forms prior to demiurgic (intellectual) forms, between unified and essential numbers (*In Met.* 183, 24–25; 126, 17). The triad, following the tetrad (or monad and dyad) seems to exist on a henadic level.[23] Mueller has argued persuasively that for Syrianus, units of mathematicals are monads which must have form imposed on them as triad, pentad, heptad, etc. These monads, moreover, are our souls, while a higher unit exists outside the soul in the intelligible world (*In Met.* 132, 8–14; 135, 16–32).[24]

---

[18] Iamblichus, *Theologoumena Arithmeticae*, p. 24ff. See D'Ooge (1926) 106.

[19] According to the *Prolegomena Philosophiae Platonicae*, a document appearing after Proclus and perhaps belonging to the Alexandrian School, auditors in Platonic dialogues were thought to be "objects of discursive reasoning", as the rational world is the image of the intelligible world (XIII). This mode of Platonic exegesis, although later than Syrianus', reflects Syrianus' interpretation of the audience as the arithmological intelligible realm.

[20] Sheppard (1982).

[21] D'Ooge (1926) 105.

[22] O'Meara (1989) 138.

[23] Proclus, *In Parm.* 1062.20–34, *PT* I, lxxxvi. See O'Meara (1989) 138.

[24] Mueller (2000) 74; see also Dillon-O'Meara, (2006) 3.

In 21.19ff., Syrianus enters a discourse on the three levels of virtues. Plotinus first systematised[25] virtues in *Ennead* I.2, where he addressed *Theaetetus* 176 AB, in which virtue is not the exercise of the rational over the irrational, as we see in the *Republic*, but "likeness to God."[26] Here, Plotinus divided virtue into three kinds:[27] the civic, a level of virtue based on practical wisdom, discursive reasoning, and control of emotions;[28] purificatory, the virtue that enables the soul to act apart from the body's influences—this virtue is an intermediary one, as the soul is still not godlike, as it continues to possess an irrational part;[29] and the higher virtue, marked by the soul's activity towards the intellect, its self-control, and its freedom.[30] The higher virtues alone deify the soul, although all virtues are contained in the higher stage.[31]

In *Sententiae* 32, Porphyry further formalizes the Plotinian scale of virtues, which he arranges according to the degree to which they divinize the human soul. As with Plotinus, his virtues range from the political, through the cathartic, to the "paradigmatic". Unlike Plotinus, Porphyry is more explicit on the issue of how virtues affect the soul versus the intellect, so that the lower virtues, such as the political and cathartic, relate to the soul, whereas the higher act on the intellect. Porphyry's highest level of virtue, "the paradigmatic", is really an archetype of virtue, not clearly recognized by Plotinus. This is taken up and elaborated by Syrianus.

---

[25] Dillon (1991) 93.

[26] Also the definition given by Alcinous in *Didaskalikos*, chapter 28.

[27] The passage of Plotinus cited here adapts the Stoic theory of grades of virtue. Plotinus, however, seems to complicate matters a bit and the later Platonists follow his lead in doing so. For instance, in *Didaskalikos* 30, Alcinous divides virtue into the perfect and the non-perfect. Non-perfect virtues use the same name as the perfect virtue, such as "brave" even when referring to a rash man, as long as the non-perfect virtue bears any similarity to the perfect virtue. He makes further distinctions by classifying types of perfect virtues, as well. Also, Alcinous does not posit an intermediate virtue *per se*, although he does explain that an intermediate disposition allows one to be virtuous (and hence possess perfect virtue) and vicious at various times—as he rightly says most men are. Of the perfect virtues, some are predominant, referring to natural qualities in *Remp*. II 366 C, and others are subsidiary, which are obtained from knowledge. Generally, however, the Stoics, Middle Platonists, Plotinus and Syrianus all build from the same Platonic principle as seen in the *Republic* that the virtues are *epistēmai*. See Dillon's commentary (1993) § 30, 185.

[28] Plotinus, *Enn*. 1. 2. 1, 17–20.

[29] Plotinus, *Enn*. 1. 2. 4.

[30] Plotinus, *Enn*. 1. 2. 6.

[31] Plotinus, *Enn*. 1. 2. 7, 1 ff.; Proclus *ET* prop. 73, the higher grades contain the lower and so contain the qualities and powers of them.

In 21.6ff., Syrianus distinguishes between intellective calm and intellective activity of the soul and the opinionative faculty. Although he uses the terms *noera* and *noeta* to refer to these principles, it appears that the first two terms take on the same meaning and that Syrianus does not use terms to differentiate between levels of metaphysical reality as opposed to baser opinion. As usual, Syrianus places an intermediary level between the two. This finds its parallel in lines 21.28ff. in his discussion of which sort of listeners are more appropriate for particular lectures.

After 22.3, Diehl divides the text, suggesting that Syrianus ends here and Proclus begins; this seems entirely possible, and Proclus seems to gradually enter with his own opinion, but the division is still an artificial one, as there is no change from indirect to direct speech. This section seems to me to be very close to the thought of Syrianus and so I have identified it as Syrianic doctrine. In lines 22.3ff., Syrianus discusses the quantity of auditors as a Pythagorean trait in a way that recollects Iamblichus' *Life of Pythagoras* (30). Here, Iamblichus writes that the majority of Pythagoras' followers were disciples called *akousmatikoi*, who seemed to follow Pythagorean teaching less because of an intellectual or philosophical understanding of his doctrine, than out of a religious faith in him and his teachings. The minority were called *mathematikoi* or "philosophers", and they had a higher understanding of Pythagoras' teachings. Syrianus alludes to this division among Pythagoras' pupils to show a division among the early followers of Plato, although it seems that the basic division between pupils who understand philosophically and those who follow based on a much lower understanding is fairly universal and much discussed in late antiquity.

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 51.13–52.2

Ὅπως δὲ δὴ κατὰ δύναμιν εὐθὺς γίγνοινθ' ὡς ἄριστοι τὰς φύσεις ἕως τοῦ· τύχην ἡγουμένοις αἰτίαν τῆς ξυλλήξεως; [*Tim.* 18 DE]

ὁ δέ γε ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος πρῶτον μὲν ἠξίου θεωρεῖν, ὅτι ὁ Πλάτων αὐτὸς προσέθηκε τὸ ἵνα ὡς ἄριστοι γίνοιντο τὰς φύσεις· δέχονται γὰρ οἱ παῖδες ὁμοιότητα φυσικὴν ἀπὸ τῶν πατέρων καὶ τῆς εὐγενείας μεταλαγχάνουσι τῆς τῶν γεννησαμένων κατὰ τὰς φυσικὰς ἀρετάς·

ἔπειτα κἀκεῖνο ἐννοεῖν, ὅτι εἰ καὶ μὴ συγκαταβάλλεσθαι τοῖς σπέρμασιν τὰς ψυχὰς ἀληθές, ἀλλὰ κατ' ἀξίαν γε εἶναι τὴν τῶν ὀργάνων διανομήν· οὐ γὰρ εἰς τὰ τυχόντα ὄργανα αἱ ψυχαὶ πᾶσαι εἰσοικίζονται, ἀλλ' ἑκάστη εἰς τὸ ἑαυτῇ προσῆκον· ἐσθλὰ μέν φησιν Ὅμηρος [Ξ 382].

ἐσθλὸς[a] ἔδυνε, χέρεια δὲ χείρονι δόσκεν.

ἔτι δὲ ὥσπερ ὁ τελεστὴς σύμβολα ἄττα τοῖς ἀγάλμασι περιτιθεὶς ἐπιτηδειότερα αὐτὰ καθίστησιν εἰς μετουσίαν δυνάμεων ὑπερτέρων, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡ ὅλη τὰ σώματα πλάττουσα τοῖς φυσικοῖς λόγοις ἀγάλματα τῶν ψυχῶν ἄλλην ἄλλοις ἐπιτηδειότητα ⟨ἐν⟩σπείρει πρὸς ἄλλων καὶ ἄλλων ψυχῶν ὑποδοχήν, ἀμεινόνων τε καὶ χειρόνων·

[a] **ἐσθλὸς** om C

And in order that, to the best of our power, so that they might at once become as good as possible… .seeing that they will ascribe the allotment to chance?

Our teacher, however, first wished to bring to our attention the fact that Plato himself added the phrase "in order that they might be engendered with the best possible natures"; for children receive a physical likeness from their parents and they acquire a share of the good breeding of their parents on the level of natural excellences.

Then, secondly, one should take into consideration that, even if it is not true that souls are not emitted with sperm, the distribution of bodies is according to merit. For all souls are not established in bodies by chance, but each soul into the body that suits it. For, as Homer says, "the good one put on the good (armour), but gave the worse to the worse."[1]

And further, just as the theurgist,[2] by attaching certain symbols to statues, makes them more receptive to participation in higher powers, even so the Universal Nature, in shaping the bodies as receptacles for souls by means of natural reason-principles,[3] sows one or other body with a receptivity for the reception of one kind of soul or another, some souls being better and others worse.

---

[1] Homer, *Il*. XIV.382. This refers to a scene in the *Iliad* where, at the bidding of Poseidon, the Greek leaders order the good warriors to put on the good armour, and the worse, the worse. Proclus regarded Homer as a theologian and developed a complex mode of exegesis. Syrianus' method of allegorising Homer seems reflected in that of Proclus, who divided poetry into three categories: at the levels of the gods; the intellect of the soul; and the sense perceptions of the soul. The allegory of this passage seems to fall in the second category, which Proclus says is characterised by good advice and moderation (*In Remp*. I. 179.10–15) and lacks the shock value typical of the poetry of the first category. By reading this poetry, the soul was meant to turn within itself in contemplation, as the lines embody the power of physical re-structuring. Regarding Syrianus' interpretation of Homer, the Suda lists two works on Homer, *Notes on the Whole of Homer* and *On the Gods in Homer*, and attributes them to both Proclus and Syrianus. On Syrianus and Homer, see Manolea (2004).

[2] Tarrant translates this as "initiate" (2007) 145.

[3] Tarrant translates as "nature formulae" (2007) 145.

ἦν καὶ ὁ πολιτικὸς ὀρθῶς ἐπιστάμενος καὶ τῶν σπερμάτων ποιεῖται λόγον πολὺν καὶ πάσης τῆς φυσικῆς ἐπιτηδειότητος, ἵνα δὴ αὐτῷ καὶ αἱ ψυχαὶ ἄρισται ἐπὶ φύσεσιν ἀρίσταις γίγνωνται.[a] ταῦτα καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀπορίαν τοῦ Λογγίνου ῥητέον.

[a] **αἱ** om MP **γίγνωνται** C: **προσγίγνωνται** M: **προσγένωνται** P

Commentary

This passage refers to a discussion in the opening conversation of the *Timaeus* between Timaeus and Socrates. Socrates summarizes his argument regarding procreation of children which he had included in his conversation about the ideal state (*Rep.* 456 A) presented the previous day. Socrates recalls that magistrates must make arrangements for the contracting of marriages, so that people would be apportioned partners like themselves. The fragment brings to light Syrianus' opinion on whether soul is generated at fertilization (the Platonic view) or at the first breath (the Stoic view), as well as the allotment of bodies to soul, some bodies being more receptive to divinity than others.

The first section, 51.18–24 introduces the issue of whether souls are emitted with sperm. These lines refer to the debate between Platonists, who generally argued that the soul was emitted with the sperm, and Stoics, who held that soul was not formed until the embryo "cooled"—at the first breath, at which point the embryo was ensouled. As is often the case in matters of orthodoxy, two of the most prominent members of the Platonic school, Syrianus and Porphyry, strayed from the generally held opinions of their school and adopted the Stoic argument that the embryo is ensouled at its first breath.

Syrianus, as with other Platonists, holds that souls are independent entities. While Syrianus' argument is not elaborated here, it does seem to refer to one aspect of the debate, the extent to which the embryo's parents influence its soul. The closest parallel to Syrianus seems to be the view of

It is this that the statesman understands correctly, and thus takes great account of insemination and of the whole question of natural suitability, in order that the best souls may come to be in the best natures. So much then needs to be said regarding the point raised by Longinus.[4]

[4] In 51, 9–12 Longinus says that "Plato never supposed that souls are emitted along with sperm. In order that the best [offspring] may exist, he pairs together like people with like people in marriage."

Chrysippus as quoted in Plutarch's *de Stoicorum repugnantiis*. In 1052 F, Plutarch first gives Chrysippus' account as follows:

> "Chrysippus believes that the foetus in the womb is nourished by nature like a plant, but that at birth the vital spirit, being chilled and tempered by the air, changes and becomes animal and hence soul has not inappropriately been named after this process."[5] Translation: Babbitt.

Chrysippus gives the Stoic view that the embryo is nourished like a plant (and thus has life), but not soul. Later, in 1053 D Plutarch debates aspects of Chrysippus' argument. The passage is worth quoting in full, as Syrianus seems to reflect Chrysippus' doctrines in his own views of the soul:

> "In his account on the generation of soul the demonstration is in conflict with the doctrine, for, while he says that the soul comes to be when the foetus has been brought to birth, the vital spirit having changed under chilling as if under tempering, yet as proof that the soul has come to be and is junior to the body he uses mainly the argument that the offspring closely resembles their parents both in bent and in character. The discrepancy of these assertions is obvious: it is not possible for the soul, coming to be after the birth, to have its character formed before the birth or else it will turn out that before soul has come to be it is similar to a soul, i.e., both exists, in that it has similarity, and because it has not yet come to be, does not

[5] Τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ φύσει τρέφεσθαι νομίζει καθάπερ φύτον· ὅταν δε τεχθῇ, ψυχόμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ στομούμενον τὸ πνεῦμα μεταβάλλειν καὶ γίγνεσθαι ζῷν· ὅθεν οὐκ ἀπό τρόπου τὴν ψυχὴν ὠνομὰσθαι παρὰ τὴν ψῦξιν.

> exist; but, if one should say that, the similarity originating in the blend of the bodies, the souls change after they have come to be, the argument for the generation of soul is ruined, since in this way the soul may also be ungenerated and upon entering the body, may also change under influence of the blend that constitutes the similarity."[6,7] Translation: Babbitt

Plutarch summarises the Stoic view, namely that the soul comes to be at birth. In the womb, the embryo takes a physical shape first and resembles the parents. When it is born, it becomes soul and takes a natural shape so that offspring resemble parents in character. Plutarch counters that the soul could be ungenerated and still be changed as it enters the body as an embryo. He says that similarity cannot exist between the embryo and parents before the birth because there was no soul, according to Chrysippus, before birth. Were the embryo to take on the physical characteristics of its parent, it would be undergoing the same basic process that embryos being ensouled would undertake. Plutarch faults Chrysippus' logic: if souls are not generated until birth, the embryo cannot take up characteristics of its parents, because that would be evidence of soul.

Proclus does not give Porphyry's view on the matter, rather he stops short by merely saying that he agrees with Longinus, who held the "at-first-breath stance", but that Porphyry does not argue this sufficiently (51, 12–13). In *ad Gaurum*, a text formerly believed to be authored by Galen, two somewhat differing views on the subject are accredited to

---

[6] ὁ περὶ ψυχῆς γενέσεως αὐτῷ λόγος μαχομένην ἔχει πρὸς τὸ δόγμα τήν ἀπόδειξιν. γίγνεσθαι μεν γάρ φησι τὴν ψυχὴν ὅταν τὸ βρέφος ἀποτεχθῇ καθάπερ στομώσει τῇ περιψύξει τοῦ πνεύματος μεταβαλόντας ἀποδείξει δε χρῆται τοῦ γεγονέναι τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ μεταγενεστέραν εἶναι μάλιστα τῷ καὶ τὸν τρόπον καὶ ἦθος ἐξομοιοῦσθαι τὰ τέκνα τοῖς γονεῦσι. Βλέπεται δε ἡ τούτων ἐναντίωσις. οὐ γὰρ οἷον τε τὴν ψυχὴν πρὸ τῆς ἀποκυήσεως ἠθοποιεῖσθαι, γιγνομένην, μετὰ τὴν ἀποκύησιν, ἢ συμβήσεται, πρὶν ἤ γενέσθαι ψυχήν, ὁμοίαν εἶναι τῇ ὁμοιότητι καὶ μὴ εἶναι διὰ τὸ μήπω γεγονέναι. εἰ δέ φήσει τις ὅτι, ταῖς κράσει τῶν σωμάτων ἐγιγνομένης τῆς ὁμοιοτητι, αἱ ψυχαὶ γενόμεναι μεταβάλλουσι, διαφθείει τὸ τεκμήριου τοῦ γεγονέναι τὴν ψυχήν· ἐνδέχεται γὰρ οὕτως καὶ ἀγένητον οὖσαν, ὅταν ἐπεισέλθη, μεταβάλλειν τῇ κράσει τῆς ὁμοιότητος.

[7] See Cicero, *Tusc. Disp*. I, 79: "Are we then to believe Panaetius when he disagrees with his revered Plato? For whilst he calls him at every mention of his name inspired… he yet fails to approve of this one opinion of his about the immortality of the souls. For he holds what nobody denies, that whatever has been born perishes; but he asserts that souls are born, as is shown by the resemblance of children to their parents, which is manifest in dispositions and not only in bodily features." Trans.: King (1927).

Vult enim, quod nemo negat, quidquid natum sit interire, nasci autem animos, quod declaret eorum similitudo, qui procreentur, quae etiam in ingeniis, non solum in corporibus appareat.

Porphyry. Smith lists two fragments for *ad Gaurum*, the first of which is taken from Iamblichus:[8]

> "According to Hippocrates the Asclepiad, the soul is enformed in the embryo (since it has the ability to participate in life); according to Porphyry, it is in the first stage of generation rather than at birth that it actually receives life and that the soul might be present."[9]

Porphyry argues that soul appears with the sperm's injection into the mother.[10] This opinion seems to agree with the opinion Proclus, rather vaguely, assigns to Porphyry in *In Tim*. 51.12, the line just preceding Syrianus' opinion. A second fragment of Porphyry's, however, cites a contrary view. In Fragment 267 Smith, Porphyry says that the embryo is neither alive nor ensouled. Rather, it is rooted like a plant and moved by nature, not by soul.[11] This closely parallels a Stoic idea of embryonic

[8] *Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta*, Smith (1993), fragment 266F.

[9] Κατὰ δ' Ἱπποκράτην τὸν τῶν Ἀσκληπιαδῶν, ὅταν πλασθῇ τὸ σπέρμα (τοτε γὰρ ἐπιτηδείως ἔχειν αὐτὸ μεταλαμβάνειν ζωῆς), κατὰ δέ Πορφύριον ἐν τῇ πρώτη ἀπογεννήσει τοῦ τικτομένου πρώτως ἡ κατ' ἐνέργειαν ζωποιία καὶ παρουσία τῆς ψυχῇς φύεται. Iamblichus, *de anima ap. Stob*. I 49, 41 (I 381, 2–6). Festugière says that the source of Iamblichus is most likely a treatise of Porphyry. See (1953) p. 224 for the editor's speculation that Iamblichus agreed with Porphyry on this issue. Festugière cites the following opinion of Iamblichus made before Iamblichus' quotation of Porphyry. Festugière surmises that Iamblichus must have agreed with Porphyry:

γένοιτο δ' ἂν καὶ ἄλλη τις δόξα οὐδέπω καὶ νῦν ῥηθεῖσα 381.6 et γένοιτο δέ κἀν ἄλλη δόξα οὐκ ἀπόβλητος 372.15, ἄλλος ἂν τις καθαρώτερον αὐτὴν προστήσαιτο τελεώτατα 364.6, ὥσπερ ἄν τις νεωτερίσεσιεν ἐν ταῖς ἐπινοίαις 367.4, τάχα ἄν τις ἐπινοήσειε καινότερον, οὐκ ἀπιθάνως 370.12, οἷους ἄν τις θείη τοὺς καινῶς μεν ἀπταίστως δε ἀντιλαμβανομένους τῶν λόγων 373.2, ὡς ἂν φαίη ᾗ νεωστὶ παρευπεθεῖσα ἥδε αἵπεσις 373.12. ἥ παράκειται δόξη οὐ παραδοθεῖσα μεν, δυναμένη δε πιθανῶς λέγεσθαι αἵπεσις 363.21. Cf. 129, n. 2.

Smith includes Porphyry's statement in his fragment collection as fr. 266. See Porphyry, Περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἐμψυχοῦται τὰ ἔμβρυα, Kalbfleisch (1895).

[10] Cf. Porph. II 2, p. 34. 23 K.

[11] Τρισὶν ἐνέτυχον μονοΒίβλοις περὶ τούτου τοῦ ζητήματος, Ἱποκράτους, Πορφυρίου καί Γαληνοῦ, ὧν ὁ μεν Ἱπποκράτης καὶ Γαληνὸς ζῷον αὐτόν φασίν ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ εἶναι, καὶ κινεῖσθαι ὑπὸ ψυχῆς τὸ μέν ἄλογου τῆς ἀλόγου, τὸ δέ λογικὸν τῆς λογικῆς, τρέφεσθαι τε ἐν τῇ μήτρᾳ διὰ τοῦ στόματος· εἶναι γὰρ ἐν ταύτῃ θηλὰς τινὰς καὶ στομάτα δι' ὧν τρέφεται. ὁ δέ γε Πορφύριος πολλοῖς λογισμοῖς καὶ ἀποδείξεσι διατείνεται μὴ εἶναι τὸ ἔμβρυον μηδε ἐμψυχωμένον, ἀλλὰ δίκην φυτοῦ καταπεφυτεῦσθαι ἐν τῇ μήτρᾳ καὶ κινεῖσθαι οὐχ ὑπὸ ψυχῆς, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ φύσεως, ὥσπερ δὴ καὶ δένδρα καὶ τὰ φυτὰ κινεῖσθαι εἴωθε, τρέφεσθαι τε οὐ διὰ τοῦ στόματος, ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦ χορίου καὶ τοῦ ὀμφαλοῦ· ὅθεν τοῦτον εὐθέως ἀποδεσμοῦσιν αἱ μαῖαι, ἵνα διὰ τοῦ στόματος τὸ γεννηθέν τρέφηται. Quotation from Michael Psellus, *de omnifaria doctrina* 115 = Porphyry Fr. 267 Smith.

nourishment in which the embryo is like a plant in that it has life, but no soul, and hence seeks only nourishment. In Ps-Plutarch's *Placita* V 15, Ps-Plutarch states "Diogenes'" opinion on the matter: "Diogenes [sc. believes] that the embryos are generated without soul, but in warmth; that is why the innate heat draws the cold into the lungs as soon as the embryo is poured forth" (*Plac.* V 15.4). This accords with a better-known fragment Kalbfleisch identifies as Porphyry's in which he says that the immortal soul enters the body only at the moment of birth. This view, moreover, accords well with the one that appears in a fragment on the subject Kalbfleisch attributes to Porphyry.[12] It seems fair to agree with the consensus and say that Porphyry places the formation of the soul at birth, a view also held by Syrianus. Syrianus' opinion, thus, seems contrary to the orthodox Platonic opinion as found in Plutarch, for instance. It appears, moreover, that Proclus adopts his master's view on this topic.

The second issue this passage raises is the distribution of souls into bodies. Syrianus says that souls are distributed according to merit, so that the best souls are assigned to the best bodies. By this, Syrianus intends differing levels of suitability in different bodies in relation to the body's own natural virtue. The first part of this process is alluded to in 51.25–30, wherein Syrianus explains that the physical logos is projected into nature from the Universal Nature and enforms a physical body using the reason principles.[13] It is nature that characterises a body and gives it qualities. These qualities make it the enmattered form which defines the physical body:[14]

> The World Soul possesses the principles and the hypostasising powers of all encosmic things, and has not only the intellective causes of man and horse and all other animals, but also all the portions of the world.
>
> (Proclus, *In Tim*, II. 266.1–5.)[15]

When nature enmatters body and gives it qualities, it imparts qualities to the body which vary from body to body.[16] The body created precedes the soul and is naturally receptive to a particular kind of soul.[17] Here,

---

[12] Ps-Galen, *ad Gaurum*, Kalbfleisch (1895) ch. XIV, pp. 53.28–54.25.

[13] Proclus, *In Tim*. I.143.17–18; III.188.5–10; III.191.7.

[14] Siorvanes (1996) 136.

[15] Translation Siorvanes (1996) 137.

[16] Proclus, *In Tim*. I.140, 163–164, 392; *In Remp*. II.266, 2.303–204; *In Parm*. 916. See Dodds' commentary, Proclus *ET*, prop. 344–345.

[17] A parallel idea to this exists in the Old Academy, in which the nature of beings is reflected in their habitat. This is especially true in the Old Academic interpretation of the pseudo-Platonic *Epinomis*, whereby creatures are assigned a cosmic rank in descending

Syrianus uses the technical term ἐπιτηδειότης, often used to refer to a theurgic object's ability to receive divine power[18]—an object, as with a soul, might be more or less receptive to the divine depending on what kind of power the object itself has (i.e., where the object falls in a metaphysical hierarchy). Objects closer to the One, or objects located in the same metaphysical rank as a higher power are more attuned to the higher power and better able to receive it (as a sunflower sits in the same rank as the sun, so it is able to receive the sun's power).[19] One object in particular considered by the theurgists to receive divine power was the statue,[20] which Syrianus gives as an analogy to the body's ability to receive soul.

This view is thus very different from the one offered by Longinus that the receptacle is neutral, and Syrianus alludes to this fact in 52.1–2 by saying that his opinions are a response to Longinus'.

order of dignity. The author of this work established a five-tiered universe in which each tier consisted of either fire, aether, air, water, or earth (981B). Soul endowed each of these ranks with appropriate beings. The rank of fire was the highest and it was the dwelling place of heavenly gods. Beings reflect their dwelling place, so that the aery race of deamons inhabit the zone of air. This idea recurs in the Middle Platonic period as well. From this idea of beings inhabiting cosmic stations appropriate to their natures, we see the beginnings of what Syrianus posits in lines 18–30. Syrianus, however, elaborates this view immensely.

[18] For Iamblichus' use of ἐπιτηδειότης, cf. *DM* 3.11.31; 24.32; 27.26; 27.29; 4.8.10; 5.7.6; 5.10.2; 6.2.7; 10.3.5; for Proclus' use of the term, cf. *In Prm*: 651.37; 668.6, 10, 14 and 20; 672.32 and 35; 690.16; 692.2.

[19] Proclus, *De Sacrificio*, II 4.

[20] Proclus, *In Tim*. III 155, 18–22 and *In Crat*. §51, p. 19, 12ff. See Shaw (1995) and Sheppard (1982) 211–224.

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 153.28–155.2

Πρῶτον μὲν τὸ τῶν ἱερέων γένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων χωρὶς ἀφωρισμένον[1] [*Tim.* 24 A]

μήποτε οὖν κάλλιον ὥσπερ ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος διῄρει ποιεῖσθαι τὴν ἐξήγησιν, μίαν μὲν δυάδα θεμένους τὸ ἱερατικὸν καὶ μάχιμον, ἑτέραν δὲ τὸ δημιουργικὸν καὶ γεωργικόν, τρίτην δὲ τὸ νομευτικὸν καὶ θηρευτικόν,[a] καὶ λαβόντας τοιαύτην τάξιν τὰ παραδείγματα μεταδιώκειν αὐτῶν.

ἔστι γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἱερατικὸν ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς τοῖς ἀναγωγοῖς καὶ τὸ μάχιμον ἐν τοῖς φρουρητικοῖς καὶ τὸ δημιουργικὸν ἐν τοῖς τὰ εἴδη πάντα καὶ τοὺς λόγους διακρίνουσι τῶν ἐγκοσμίων, τὸ δὲ γεωργικὸν ἐν τοῖς τὴν φύσιν ἄνωθεν κινοῦσι καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς διασπείρουσι περὶ τὴν γένεσιν· σποράν γὰρ καὶ ὁ Πλάτων ὀνομάζει τὴν εἰς γένεσιν πτῶσιν τῆς ψυχῆς, τὸ δὲ σπείρειν οἰκειότατον τοῖς γεωργοῖς, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ συλλαμβάνειν ταῖς τῆς φύσεως ἀπογεννήσεσι. τὸ δὲ νομευτικὸν ⟨ἐν⟩ τοῖς τὰ εἴδη πάντα τῆς ζωῆς διακεκριμένως ἐπιτροπεύουσι τὰ ἐν τῇ γενέσει φερόμενα· καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Πολιτικῷ [271 D] νομέας θείους τινὰς αὐτὸς ἡμῖν παραδέδωκε. τὸ δὲ θηρευτικὸν ⟨ἐν⟩ τοῖς τὰ ἔνυλα πάντα πνεύματα διατάττουσι· καὶ γὰρ θῆρας ἐκεῖνα καλεῖν ἔθος ἐστὶ τοῖς θεολόγοις.

καὶ ταῦτα πάντα τὰ γένη τῇ μέσῃ προσήκει δημιουργίᾳ, τὸ ἐπιστρεπτικόν, τὸ φρουρητικόν, τὸ τὰς ψυχικὰς λήξεις διέπον, τὸ τὰ εἴδη τῆς ζωῆς διακυβερνῶν τὰ γενεσιουργά, τὸ δημιουργικὸν πᾶν καὶ τῶν ἐνύλων εἰδοποιόν, τὸ τῶν ἐσχάτων πνευμάτων[b] τακτικόν. τούτων δὲ τῶν γενῶν πάντων ἕτερον ⟨δεῖ⟩ τιθέναι τὸ τῆς φρονήσεως ἐπιμελούμενον

[a] **θηρατικὸν** N schol. M bis [b] **πνευμάτων** MN: **πραγμάτων** P

[1] While the lemma only refers to the priestly class, the fragment reflects *Tim.* 24 AB, where the priest relates to Solon the Egyptian civic classes in their laws: "You see first how the priestly class is separated off from the rest; next, the class of craftsmen, of which each sort works by itself without mixing with any other; then the classes of shepherds, hunters, and farmers, each distinct and separate. Moreover, the military class here, as no doubt you have noticed, is kept apart from all the other classes, being enjoined by the law to devote itself solely to the work of training for war." Trans.: Bury (1929).

You see, first, how the priestly class is separated off from the rest;

Perhaps then it might be better to make our interpretation accord with our Master's division of the text, postulating as a first pair the priestly and war-like, as a second the craftsmanly and the agricultural, and as a third the shepherds and hunters, and in postulating such an order seek to investigate their models.

For the "priestly" class is to be found among the anagogic gods and the warlike class among the guardian gods, and the class of craftsmen is among those who discriminate all the forms and the creative principles[2] of the universe, and the agricultural are among those that move the natural world from above, and sow the souls into the realm of creation: for Plato calls the "sowing" the fall of the soul into generation, and sowing is most suited to farmers, even as conception is most suited to the products of Nature. But the herdsman class is found among the gods who individually administer all the forms of life being brought into creation: for in the *Statesman*[3] [Plato] gave us divine shepherds. But the hunter class is among those gods who organise all the spirits involved in matter:[4] and indeed the theologians are accustomed to call them "beasts".[5]

And all these classes belong to the median level of creation, the class which stimulates return towards the gods, that which guards, that which arranges the psychic orders, that which directs the creative forms of life, all that which creates and produces the forms of things immanent in matter, that which bestows order on the lowest level of spirits. But as different from all these classes, we may postulate another which cares for wisdom

[2] Tarrant translates as "encosmic things" (2007) 251.

[3] Plato, *Statesman* 271 D.

[4] ἔνυλος is a term referring to enmattered souls. Cf. Proclus *ET* prop. 195; Plotinus, *Enn*. II.3.17; Damascius *De Pr*. 126; Iamblichus, *DM*, 6.3; Syrianus, *In Met*. 50,5.

[5] *Chaldean Oracles* fr. 157 Des Places.

καὶ θεωρητικόν, ὃ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἐξυμνήσει πρώτου μνησθεὶς τοῦ ἱερατικοῦ γένους ὡς ἱερεύς.

ἑπτὰ οὖν τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἡ μονὰς ἐξῄρηται τῆς ἑξάδος, καὶ ἣ μὲν ἀνάλογόν ἐστι τῷ ἑνὶ νῷ, τῷ πᾶσαν συνέχοντι τὴν δημιουργίαν τῶν γενητῶν, ἣ δὲ τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτὸν μερικωτέροις ἔθνεσιν, ἀναγωγοῖς, φρουρητικοῖς, εἰδοποιοῖς ζῳοποιοῖς, ἀγελάρχαις τῆς ἡμέρου ζωῆς, κρατητικοῖς τῆς θηριώδους φύσεως, ἃ δὴ καὶ ἐν τῷ παντὶ διώρισται ἀπὸ τῶν ἁπλῶν. καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, φησί, ταῦτα πάρεστιν ὁρᾶν, πρώτως μὲν παρὰ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις, δευτέρως δὲ παρὰ τοῖς Σαΐταις, κατὰ τὴν τῶν γενῶν διαίρεσιν ἑκάστου τὸ οἰκεῖον ἔργον ἀποπληροῦντος ἀφωρισμένως· τοῦτο γὰρ δηλοῖ τὸ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ τὸ χωρίς, ἵνα τὴν ἀμιγῆ καθαρότητα τῶν γενῶν νοήσωμεν ἄνωθεν ἄχρι τῶν ἐσχάτων προϊοῦσαν δι' ὑφέσεως.

Commentary

This fragment equates the Egyptian civic classes with classes of being in the cosmos. Syrianus' interpretation is preceded by that of Porphyry and Iamblichus and, in typical Syrianic fashion, reacts to the metaphysical interpretations of both. This fragment is of particular interest as Syrianus discusses not only the particular function of grades of daemons in 153.28–154.18, but he shows the relationship between the grades in 154.18–155.2. This relationship forms the basis for key propositions of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*.

While Syrianus does not mention Porphyry or Iamblichus in his commentary, his views clearly reflect those of both authors, whose interpretations Proclus discusses before that of his Master.[6] In his interpretation, Syrianus corrects his predecessors (introduced by μήποτε) (153.28), whom he criticizes for dividing the classes incorrectly. He distinguishes τὸ δημιουργικόν as a separate category and makes three groups of two, a division that seems to be in accordance with the text of the *Timaeus*. Porphyry and Iamblichus, however, omit the last category and propose five classes of divine power which are not in pairs. Porphyry calls the

[6] Porphyry and Iamblichus' interpretations of this *Timaeus* passage have been treated quite thoroughly by Dillon (1973), Iamblichus, *In Tim* fr. 16 Dillon.

and is contemplative; this he himself will celebrate beyond everything by making mention first as a priest himself, of the priestly class.

So these classes in total are seven, and as the monad is separate from the hexad it is analogous to the single Intellect, which holds together the created existence of beings, while the hexad is analogous to the classes that are more particular and subordinated to the Intellect, those classes which elevate, guard, produce the forms, create life, shepherd the tame creation, control the wild nature, which classes are kept apart throughout the universe from the simple classes. Indeed, even among men, as he says, it is possible to see that these classes are present, first among the Athenians, secondarily among the Saitans, each performing its own work separately according to their division of classes. For this is what is demonstrated by the phrases, "apart from the others" and "separate" in order that we may grasp that the unmixed purity of the classes proceeds down to the lowest ranks of Being by descent.

---

entire sublunary realm demiurgic, while Iamblichus does not use the term demiurgic in his interpretation, but still describes the agricultural daemons in much the same way as Syrianus.[7] It has been posited that Porphyry and Iamblichus chose such a division because it corresponded to an accepted division of cosmic powers.[8] In their respective interpretations, Porphyry understands the Egyptian classes as levels of daemon, while Iamblichus makes a metaphysical reading, understanding the classes as levels of superior being. Iamblichus follows Plato, who gives the triadic structure of priest, craftsman, and soldier. Syrianus elaborates this exegesis further, so that each level of Egyptian society corresponds with a level of god.

Because Syrianus builds on Iamblichus' interpretation, it is useful to see how Iamblichus[9] thinks the Egyptian classes are secondary divinities,

[7] See Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 16, 25–26 Dillon.

[8] See Dillon's commentary on Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 16 Dillon (1973) 283.

[9] I 152, 28ff.: "The divine Iamblichus, on the other hand, criticises these theories as being neither good Platonism nor true—for archangels never merit so much as a mention in Plato, nor is the warlike class of the souls that are inclined towards bodies; for these should not be distinguished from gods or daemons; and indeed it is absurd, if we rank these in the middle class, and gods and daemons among the lowest demiurgic classes; nor should those be shepherds who have failed of human mind, but have a certain sympathetic connection with living things; for it is not from human species that those daemons who watch over human nature derive their essences; nor are they hunters who

as opposed to Porphyry,[10] who interprets them as levels of daemon. Iamblichus' interpretation is a response to Porphyry's, and, before making his own statements about the Egyptian classes, he begins by working through each of Porphyry's types of daemons. The interpretations of Porphyry and Iamblichus are as follows. Both provide identifications for priests, soldiers, shepherds, hunters, and farmers. Porphyry begins by saying that the priests are archangels turned towards the gods, a suggestion criticised by Iamblichus in a dialectical point who argues that Plato never mentions archangels. Iamblichus suggests that the priests represent secondary οὐσίαι and δυνάμεις, who honor and tend αἰτίαι (primary powers) prior to them. Next comes the warlike class, which Porphyry says is analogous to souls that descend into bodies. The source of Porphyry's demonology here has been identified[11] with Origen's περὶ δαιμόνων. Iamblichus says that Porphyry places this level too low; they should operate at the transcendent level. For Iamblichus, the soldiers are those who turn back all that is godless and give power to the divine. The third class

---

shut up the soul in the body as in a cage; for this is not the way that the soul is united with the body, nor is this a type of theory proper to philosophy, but one full of unhellenic trumpery; nor are the farmers to be related to Demeter; for the gods transcend the immediate causes of Nature.

Having made these criticisms, he establishes the priests as analogous through their similarity to all the secondary essences and powers, such as honour and serve the causes prior to themselves, and the shepherds to all those in the cosmos that have been allotted dominion over life that inclines towards the body and over the irrational powers, which arranges these in order, and the hunters to the general powers, which order the secondary powers by means of their search for Being, and the farmers to those who bring about the efficacy of those seeds which are borne down from heaven to earth, and the warriors to those who overthrow all that is godless, and make the divine to triumph." Trans. Dillon, Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 16 Dillon (1973) 121–123.

[10] "The philosopher Porphyry lays down as follows: the priests are analogous to the archangels in heaven turned towards the gods, of whom they are messengers, and the warlike class are analogous to the daemons that descend into bodies, and the shepherds, again to those who are appointed over the herds of animals, whom they declare in secret teachings to be souls who have failed of human intelligence, and have a disposition towards animals; since there is one who has charge of the herd of men and certain particular ones, some overseeing races, other cities, and others yet individuals; and the hunters are analogous to those who hunt down souls and enclose them in bodies; for there are some who take pleasure in hunting after living things, such as they make out Artemis to be and with her a further multitude of hunting daemons; and the farmers are those given charge over the crops. And this whole polity of sublunary daemons, divided into many classes, is called by Plato demiurgic through the fact that he was looking to a finished product already existing or coming to be."

[11] Lewy (1978) Excurses XI, 497 ff. identifies Porphyry's demonology with Origen's in this passage and in Porphyry's *De Abst*. II 36–43. Cf. Dillon (1973) 283.

for Porphyry is the shepherds, who are souls who have failed of human intelligence and have a disposition towards animals. Iamblichus attacks this reading, which involves existing at a certain rank out of punishment, and denies that they ever were human souls, let alone malicious human souls. Instead, he credits the "shepherds" with having ἐπιστασία over bodily and immaterial life—they are divinities which supervise irrational life; as general powers, shepherds bring order to secondary orders. The last two groups Porphyry defines in terms of their tasks. The "hunters" comprise the fourth group, and according to Porphyry their job is to hunt souls and enclose them in bodies, while the farmers, as the fifth group, are given charge over crops. Iamblichus says, further, that the hunters order their secondary powers by means of their search for Being and the farmers are entities who "sow" heavenly seeds (presumably here souls) into the earthly realm. Iamblichus' point is that Plato would not have put lower entities before others, and he argues against Porphyry for not preserving the proper analogies Plato offers in the text. For Iamblichus, secondary powers such as priests and shepherds guide the souls, while hunters organise souls and farmers prepare the perfection of the universe using the seeds sown from heaven to earth. Iamblichus is not clear what level of beings he is talking about, whether minor divinities or secondary divinities.

Syrianus divides the classes by looking to models at higher levels (153.32).[12] He groups together the priestly and warlike class, which he places at the hieratic level of the anagogic gods (154.1). Although the two classes are grouped together, they differ in function: the priestly class raises souls and perfects all the effects contained in their activity. The soldiers, also in the first group, are a guardian class (154.2). The second group consists of the demiurgic and agricultural classes (154.4–12). The demiurgic class makes the forms and the farmers bring the souls into generation (154.12 ff.). The last group is that of the shepherds and hunters, the former of which administers all forms of created life, while the latter organises spirits placed in matter. Syrianus' interpretation can be understood in the light of Proclus' theory of divine series, which seems to be an adaptation of the Syrianic principle of divine series elucidated here. Divine series, as they appear in Proclus, are based on the premise

[12] It is possible that this class was modeled on higher levels, although it was much lower itself. Proclus subsumes these Syrianic classes into the lower orders: that of the fatherly series (the demiurgic group), the γεννητικός and ζωογόνος, and the ἀναγωγός, a perfecting group which returns effects to their causes. See Rosán (1949) 136.

that immediate effects of the unparticipated One are a series of gods (or henads), unities that contain aspects of the One but are plural. Each henad embraces (or "possesses") a particular quality of the unparticipated One. The henads, moreover, are themselves each subdivided into vertical series, so that higher gods are said to posseses a quality, which is passed to the lower gods, who possess a less intense version of that quality.[13]

Proclus generally divides his series into triads which oversee existence, power, and activity respectively: a triadic division that reflects Syrianus' triads here. The names Proclus uses for his classes often vary between orders and the text he is interpreting, but we also see some parallels between his names and the names Syrianus uses. In Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, the first class which oversees existence[14] is often called the guardian class. It is a paternal order analogous to the Good which holds the levels together in a singular manner.[15] It seems that Syrianus' priestly/warlike class, as the highest order of the three, could have been a prototype for Proclus' gods of existence. As a guardian class, this class could have been seen as preserving unity.[16] The second Procline level, that of power, is a productive power. Proclus often describes it as life-giving (ζωόγονος), in so far as it is a divinity that bestows life.[17] This level seems to parallel the demiurgic order which distinguishes forms and portions out souls at creation. Proclus gives as his third category those which oversee activity and are engaged in perfecting. He generally refers to this group as ἀναγωγός,[18] as it returns effects to their cause. It seems that Syrianus' third class engages in a particular type of demiurgic activity, as an offshoot of his second class. Syrianus' herdsman/hunter group administers forms of life and arranges spirits, which seems to be ζωογόνικος, rather than noetic, as Proclus generally describes his third category.

[13] In *ET* prop. 135, Proclus says that "Every god is possessed directly by some actual thing and everything which is divine returns to one god so that the number of the gods is identical with the number of real things that possess them." Trans. Dodds (1963).

[14] Proclus, *ET* prop. 126; and Proclus, *PT* 68–69.

[15] Proclus, *ET* prop. 154: "All that is protective in the gods preserves each principle in its proper station, so that by its unitary character it transcends derivative existences and is founded upon the primals." Trans. Dodds (1963).

[16] Proclus, *ET* prop. 125: identity preserved (φυλάττει) in procession.

[17] Proclus, *ET* prop. 155 and *ET* prop. 157.

[18] Proclus, *ET* prop. 158.

For Syrianus, the noetic category appears in a group he adds in addition to his original five groups in 154.18–20. This noetic class oversees wisdom and is θεωρητικόν as a kind of one-intellect (154.23). The one-intellect is analogous to the monad which acts upon the hexad (being) to produce the created universe. Syrianus makes it clear that the classes which compose the hexad are less simple than the monad and are produced by higher ranks. The idea that higher classes are more simple and without mixture, while lower classes are impure and produced is an important principle that re-appears in Proclus' discussion of divine series.

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 218.13–28

Ἡμᾶς δὲ τοὺς περὶ παντὸς λόγους ποιεῖσθαί πῃ μέλλοντας ἢ γέγονεν ἢ καὶ ἀγενές ἐστιν, εἰ μὴ παντάπασι παραλλάττομεν [*Tim.* 27 C]

Μήποτε οὖν, ὥσπερ ἔλεγεν ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος, τῶν λόγων πολλαχῶς λεγομένων—ἄλλοι γάρ εἰσιν οἱ ἀπὸ νοῦ προϊόντες δημιουργικοὶ λόγοι, οἵους καὶ ὁ δημιουργὸς ἐρεῖ [41.42] πρὸς τοὺς νέους θεούς· καὶ γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν λέγει [37 A] κινουμένην πρὸς ἑαυτήν· καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς οἱ ἐν τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ θεωρούμενοι, καὶ ἄλλοι τρίτην ἀπόστασιν ἀπὸ νοῦ λαχόντες, οἱ ἐν προφορᾷ διδασκαλίας ἕνεκα κινούμενοι καὶ τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους κοινωνίας—

εἰδὼς ὁ Τίμαιος, ὅτι τοὺς μὲν δημιουργικοὺς[a] λόγους ὁ δημιουργὸς ὑφίστησιν, τοὺς δὲ ἐπιστημονικοὺς οὐ νῦν μέλλει γεννᾶν, ἀλλ' ἐν ἑαυτῷ προείληφεν αὐτούς, μόνους δὲ τοὺς ἐν προφορᾷ λόγους ποιήσεται Σωκράτους ἕνεκα, διὰ τοῦτο τοὺς περὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἔφατο ποιήσεσθαί πῇ λόγους· ἄλλο γάρ ἐστι τὸ νοερῶς, ἄλλο τὸ ἐπιστημονικῶς, ἄλλο τὸ διδασκαλικῶς, καὶ τὸ πῇ τὰς διαφορὰς ταύτας ἐνδείκνυται τῶν λόγων.

[a] **δημιουργικοὺς** (ικ in lit.) C

We therefore who are pursuing to deliver a discourse concerning the Universe, how it was created or haply is uncreate (if so be that we are not utterly demented)

Perhaps, therefore, as our Master says, since *logoi*[1] have many senses—for some *logoi* are demiurgic, proceeding from Intellect, which are such as the Demiurge will utter to the young gods (41A7–42E9); and again, he says that the soul "speaks"[2] (37 A) when moved towards itself;[3] and others are to be seen as contemplated in thought, and a third kind, while is allotted a third remove from the Intellect, are stirred to external utterance for the sake of teaching and of communion with one another.

Timaeus, then, knowing that the Demiurge generates demiurgic *logoi*, but is not now intending to create *logoi* of pure thought[4] (these he has conceived beforehand in himself), said that he will, for the sake of Socrates, only create *logoi* in external utterance, for this reason has declared that he will deliver *logoi* in some way concerning the universe. For it is one thing to speak noetically, another scientifically, another instructively, and the expression "in some way" indicates these differences.

[1] I take *logoi* here to be understood by Syrianus as "reason-principles". Runia and Share translated it as "accounts" (2008) 55.

[2] Better to read λέγειν φησί with ms. M (i.e., λόγοι προφορικοί).

[3] Runia and Share translate this sentence, "the soul when moving speaks to itself" (2008) 55.

[4] ἐπιστημονικός in sense of pure thought in the mind.

Commentary

This aporia concerns the textual criticism of πῃ, for which there is an elaborate history of Platonic interpretation. The criticism of πῃ falls into a larger discussion on Platonic textual emendation in 27 C of the *Timaeus*. The major issues included whether in the phrase "η γέγονεν η καὶ ἀγενές ἐστιν" (1.218.28 ff.) the first and second η are aspirated, or not: either ἦ… ἦ (a suggestion also taken by most modern editions of the text, including OCT, Budé, and Teubner) or ἢ… ἢ (accepted by Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Proclus) and used to express that a temporal creation is not to be taken literally.[5] Another textual problem for the Platonists included one mentioned by John Philoponus[6] of Calvenus Taurus, whereby Taurus reads 27 C 5 as "εἰ γέγονεν, εἰ καὶ ἀγενές ἔστιν" ("whether it was created, even if it is uncreated"), a reading Philoponus himself accepted.[7]

In the light of this history of textual criticism on *Tim*. 27 C, our fragment discusses the πῃ ("a discourse in some way concerning the Universe"). Regarding the Middle Platonic tradition, Proclus tells us that this πῃ had been discussed by Albinus, who understood it to mean that the cosmos was eternally existent in some way, in so far as it contains the principle of createdness.[8] Alexander of Aphrodisias, in his *Commentary on the De Caelo*, omitted the πῃ, which Dillon takes to indicate that it was an addition of the second century Platonists.[9]

The first view given is by Proclus, who says that Plato meant to attach the πῃ with the ποιεῖσθαι πῃ μέλλοντας λόγους, making the text read "those who in some way intended to make *logoi* on the universe" (218.2).[10] The next view given is that of οἱ παλαιότεροι τῶν ἐξηγητῶν[11] (218.3 ff.) (rather than Porphyry, whom Proclus usually names first) who take the πῃ with ἀγενές and γενητόν so that the universe is in some ways uncreated, in other ways created.[12] Next comes the view of Iamblichus, (218.8 ff.), who attaches the πῃ to περὶ τοῦ παντὸς so that the dialogue was "in some way" about the universe, but "in some way" not. Iamblichus understands this as Plato leaving aside discussion about unlimited and

[5] See Proclus, *In Tim*. I. 218.28 ff.
[6] Philoponus, *De Aeternitate Mundi*, p. 186, 17 ff. Rabe.
[7] On Philoponus and Taurus' emendation of the *Timaeus*, see Dillon (1989) 58–59.
[8] Proclus, *In Tim*. I. 218.28 ff., see Dillon (1989) 57–58.
[9] Quoted in Philoponus, *Aet*. p. 214, 19 ff. Rabe.
[10] λέγει.γὰρ τοὺς περὶ παντὸς λόγους ποιεῖσθαι πῃ μέλλοντας.
[11] Possibly pre-Plotinian philosophers.
[12] Τὸ πᾶν πῃ μεν.

formless matter,[13] but investigating the Forms and their variety within the universe.[14] For Iamblichus, the difficulty lies with the fact that we are discussing forms, not matter.

The indirect quotation from Syrianus begins with the imperfect ἐλέγεν (218. 13), which makes what follows sound like it comes from Syrianus' lectures. Proclus later adapts Syrianus' interpretation, which places the πῃ with the λόγος so that Plato τὸ πῇ τὰς διαφορὰς ταύτας ἐνδείκνυται τῶν λόγων. Syrianus distinguishes three types of λόγοι: the noetic, scientific, and instructive (218.25–28). These seem, moreover, to fall under the Stoic categories of *logos*: *logos endiathetos* and *logos prophorikeos*.

The first *logos* in *nous* is the creative principle of the universe. This *logos* exists within the Demiurge, as do the scientific words. These lines most likely reflect *Tim*. 41A7–42E9, whereby the Demiurge created the universe by speaking to the lower gods. Here, Syrianus' first type of *logos* is the Stoic demiurgic *logos*, the intermediary reason-principle by which the creator creates the universe without directly involving himself.[15]

The second *logos* is in the individual at the level of understanding (*epistēmē*). The Stoics also employed *logos* as a reason or kind of knowledge used by men to understand intellectual presentations.[16] In this way, *logos* was connected to *physis*, in so far as *logos* forced men to understand and connect to reality.[17]

The third kind of *logos* Syrianus lists is instructive, those words uttered by us for the purpose of communing with each other.[18] The *logos* was considered to be the first part of dialectic, while the *lekton* which interpreted and gave meaning to the utterance, was the second. Porphyry,[19] according

[13] Dillon notes in p. 297 that Iamblichus maintains that there is no reference to matter or material creation until 48 E ff., so that apparent references before that point must refer to a noetic form of *hūle*.

[14] ὁ δε γε Θεῖος Ἰάμβλιχος πῃ μεν περὶ τοῦ παντὸς ἔσεσθαί φησὶ τὸν λόγον, πῇ δ' οὔ· Τὴν γὰρ ὕλην ἅτε ἀόριστον οὖσαν καὶ ἀνείδεον ἄρρητον ἀφίησι, τὴν δε εἰδητικὴν πᾶσαν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ποικιλίαν ἀνασκέψεται.

[15] The Stoics closely connect the creative seminal reason principles with the creator. See Philo *Aet*. 9.94–103; Seneca, *Nat. Quaest*. 3.29.3; Diog. Laert. *Lives* 7.135–136; Plotinus *Enn*. 3.17.

[16] Chrysippus, *SVF* II 841; Diogenes VII 47; Sandbach (1971) 17. Stobaeus included among his definitions of epistēmē: epistēmē is a "*systema* of specific items like the rational apprehension of particulars present in the good man" *Ecl*. II pp. 73 ff. (*SVF* II I 12).

[17] On the connection between truth and logos, see Long (1971) 98–104.

[18] This seems parallel to the Stoic category of logos as "significant utterance" or sound which acted as a dialectical sign. Diogenes Laertius VII 56 (*SVF* III p. 213). See Lloyd (1971) 58–71.

[19] Porph. ap. Simpl. *In Cat*. (*CAG* VIII) pp. 10, 20; 11, 6.

to the Stoic division of dialectic, examined grammar and divided the nouns and verbs as elements of *logos* and all other parts of speech as *lexis*, as all other parts of speech depend on nouns and verbs for meaning.[20] It is clear that *logos* and *lekton* were mainstays of Stoic grammatical education, and hence it makes some sense that Syrianus might call *logos* instructive.

That the Demiurge has a special connection to the *logoi* is hardly new to Platonic interpretation of the *Timaeus*: the most pronounced understanding of this probably occurs in Philo, who places the *logoi* within the Demiurge so that the idea of the universe exists within the Demiurge from the beginning of time.[21] Syrianus takes this idea of *logos* and the Demiurge, however, and categorises three Stoic meanings for *logos* in order to show different aspects of the Demiurge's intellectual creation. Syrianus' categorisation of the demiurgic *logoi* underscores his interpretation of the Demiurge as generative Intellect: hence, Syrianus can call his creation "noetic". The Demiurge is generative as an entity who produces the realm of becoming, including all intelligibles.[22] That the creation is scientific and instructive shows how the Demiurge supervises a range of demiurgic activity, including that of the younger gods.

[20] Lloyd (1971) 61.
[21] Philo, *Leg. All.* 111 96; *Heres.* 133–236; *Cher.* 125. See Dillon (1977) 158–159.
[22] Proclus, *In Tim.* I.260.19–26. See Opsomer (2000) 115–117.

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 241.3–31

Τὸ μὲν δὴ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτόν, ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ὄν, τὸ δὲ αὖ δόξῃ μετ᾽ αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστόν, γιγνόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὄντως δὲ οὐδέποτε ὄν [*Tim.* 28 A].

Τούτοις δὴ τοῖς ἀνδράσιν εὖ λέγουσι καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος ἠρέσκετο διδάσκαλος· καὶ γὰρ εἰ μικρόν πως τὴν λέξιν μεταρρυθμίσαιμεν, αὐτόθεν ἔσται τὸ πᾶν καταφανές · τὸ μὲν δὴ ἀεὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὄν ἐστι νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτόν, τὸ δὲ γιγνόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὄντως δὲ οὐδέποτε ὄν, δόξῃ μετ᾽ αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστόν· ταῦτα γὰρ καὶ τοῖς προειρημένοις ἀκόλουθα· τί τὸ ὂν ἀεί, γένεσιν δὲ οὐκ ἔχον, καὶ τί τὸ γιγνόμενον, ὂν δὲ οὐδέποτε· τοῦ μὲν ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ὄν⟨τος⟩ τὸ ἀεὶ ὂν καὶ γένεσιν οὐκ ἔχον δηλοῦντος—ἰσοδυναμεῖ γὰρ τὸ κατὰ ταὐτὰ τῷ γένεσιν οὐκ ἔχον- τοῦ δὲ γιγνομένου μέν, οὐδέποτε δὲ ὄντος τῷ γιγνομένῳ καὶ ἀπολλυμένῳ καὶ ὄντως οὐδέποτε ὄντι τὸ αὐτὸ σημαίνοντος, εἰ καὶ σαφέστερον ἀπήγγελται, διὰ τῆς τοῦ ὄντως προσθήκης ἐνδεικνυμένου τοῦ Πλάτωνος, ὅτι καθὸ μὲν γιγνόμενόν ἐστιν, οὐκ ἔστι, καθὸ δὲ ἴνδαλμα τοῦ ὄντος ἀποφέρεται, κατὰ τοσοῦτόν ἐστιν οὐ γιγνόμενον. ἐν γὰρ τοῖς ὁρισμοῖς καὶ τὰ ὁριστὰ μᾶλλον ἐσαφήνισε διὰ τῶν προσθέσεων· ὃ μὲν γὰρ εἶπεν ἄνω ἀεὶ ὄν, τοῦτο προσθεὶς εἶπεν ἀεὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὄν, ἵνα μὴ τὸ ἀεὶ τὸ χρονικὸν ἀκούσωμεν, ἀλλὰ τὸ αἰώνιον· τοῦτο γὰρ ὁμοῦ πᾶν καὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ὄν, τὸ δὲ χρονικὸν

Now the one of these is apprehensible by thought with the aid of reasoning, since it is ever uniformly existent; whereas the other is an object of opinion with the aid of unreasoning sensation, since it becomes and perishes and is never really existent.

These latter authorities speak well, and our teacher approved their view. For if we rearrange the text just a little, at once everything will be clear: that which is ever uniformly existent "is", that which is apprehensible by thought with the aid of reasoning, whereas that "which is coming to be and perishing and is never really existent" is "an object of opinion with the aid of irrational sensation." For this is in accord with what has preceded: "What exists eternally, and has no generation, and what is coming into being, but is never existent?"[1] (27 D 6). Since the phrase "that which is ever uniformly existent" means the same as "that being is eternal and does not have creation." There is an equivalence between "identical with itself" and "not coming to be"—and "that which is coming into being but never exists" has the same significance as "that which is born and dies and is never really being", except that this has been described in a manner more precise, with Plato showing through the addition of "really" that, in so far as it is coming into being, it is not, in so far as it has acquired a trace of being, to that extent it is not something which comes into being. [Plato] has also, in these definitions, rendered more clear also the objects to be defined through the words that he has added. What has been described above as "being which is always", this he calls now by an addition, "always existent in the same terms", lest we understand the "always" as temporal, but rather as eternal. For this one is all things together, and existent in the same terms whereas what

[1] Whittaker maintains that ἀεὶ after γιγνόμενον is an ideological emendation. On textual emendations and late antique readers of the *Timaeus*, see Whittaker (1973) 387–391. Whittaker points out that the second ἀεὶ is not present in the Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 173 (P). On the history of the second ἀεὶ and textual emendation in the *Timaeus*, see Dillon (1989) 61, where he says that the whole Platonic tradition omits the second ἀεὶ.

τῷ ἀπείρῳ τοῦ χρόνου συνεκτέταται· ὃ δὲ εἶπε γιγνόμενον, τοῦτο μετὰ τοῦ ἀπολλύμενον εἴρηκεν, ἵνα μὴ τὰς προόδους ἁπλῶς γενέσεις ἀκούσωμεν, ὃ καὶ ἐπὶ θεῶν τάττεται τῶν ἐπέκεινα τοῦ ὄντος, ἀλλὰ τὰς τὴν ἀπώλειαν ἐχούσας σύστοιχον. εἰσὶ δ' οὖν οἱ ἀποδοθέντες ὁρισμοὶ τοιοῦτοί τινες· ἀεὶ ὂν ἐστι τὸ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτόν· γιγνόμενόν ἐστι τὸ δόξῃ μετ' αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστόν.

Commentary

This is a discussion of the contrast between the physical and intelligible world, spurred by literary criticism based on a lemma. Unlike the previous fragments, Proclus uses γὰρ with direct speech, rather than γὰρ followed by an accusative and infinitive of indirect speech (241.4). It seems that in the first construction, Proclus has more or less appropriated the opinion of his teacher. With indirect speech, Proclus creates some distance between himself and his teacher, and this construction is usually followed by some correction, however slight.

There is some history regarding textual emendation of this passage by Platonists. While the second ἀεὶ is omitted by the entire post-Platonic tradition,[4] including Cicero and Calcidius, it is included by Philoponus and several others.[5] It is interesting that, unlike Proclus, Syrianus does not address this issue of the meaning or relevance of the second ἀεὶ.[6]

---

[4] Dillon (1989) 60. Dillon also lists Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Intro. Arith.* 1.2.2, Numenius fr. 7 Des Places, Alexander of Aphrodisias *ap.* Philop. *Aet.* 214.3–4, and Sextus Empiricus *AM* 7.142 as omitting it. Dillon (1989) 60.

[5] Philoponus, *In de An.* 76.23 f.; *in Phys.* 56.2 ff., Eusebius, *P.E.* 11.9 and a probable reading in Pseudo-Justin, *Cohort.* See Dillon (1989) 60.

[6] Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 233.18 ff.: "Why, they say, did Plato not add ἀεὶ to γιγνόμενον also, as he did to ὄν, or ποτέ ('at one time or another'), so that he could have a thorough-going antithesis to "ἀεί ὄν." On this passage, Whittaker takes Proclus' interpretation to mean that he knows a reading without the second ἀεί, while Dillon shows that there was "some

is temporal is stretched out along the infinity of time.[2] The one which he said is "created" he said this would be destroyed, in order that we not understand the processions simply as creations, sometimes that is applied to the gods also beyond being, but those [other] processions which have destruction associated with them. Thus, these are the definitions presented. The being which always is, is "that which is apprehended by intellection joined to a definition", whereas "what is coming into being", is that which is apprehended by a conjectural judgement founded on an irrational sensation.[3]

[2] The previous opinion is possibly that of Iamblichus, and Syrianus is, in effect, arguing with him and expanding him.

[3] In his quotation of the text, Proclus seems to leave out the second ἀεὶ.

Syrianus leaves the text but understands it differently—Proclus says that by rearranging the word order, the syntax emerges more plainly:[7]

1. ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ὄν (τὸ ὄν ἀεί δε οὐκ ἔχον): The thing which is always unchangeably real.
2. γίγνομενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὄντως δέ οὐδεπότε ὄν (τὸ γιγνόμενου μέν ἀεί ὅν δε οὐδεπότε): The thing that becomes and passes away, but never has real being.

The terms to be defined correspond to the definitions (ὁρισμόι) so that the first part of the definition answers the first part of the question, and the second part of the definition answers the second part of the question:

1. τὸ νοήσει μετὰ λὸγου περιληπτόν: That which is apprehended by thought.
2. τὸ δε αὖ δόξῃ μετ' αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστόν: That which is the object of belief with unreasoning sensation.

speculation on the matter, which may precisely have led to the inclusion of the ἀεί." Dillon (1989) 61, note 26. While it does seem that Proclus may be arguing against a particular reading of the text, he does not use "*hoi men*", "*hoi de*" to refer to other commentators, as he often does in the *Timaeus* commentary. Based on the fact that Proclus does not specifically address other commentators, I would agree with Dillon's more conservative interpretation of Proclus' remarks.

[7] Taylor emends the text in his translation, so that the predicate is the subject which is to be defined.

The text now reads: The definition of "that which is always real" is "apprehended by thought"; and the definition of that "which becomes and passes and never has real being" is "that which is the object of belief with unreasoning sensation." This sentiment is repeated again in 28 C: "as we saw, sensible things, that are to be apprehended by belief together with sensation, are things that become and can be generated."

Syrianus' arrangement of the text thus differs from the older interpreters. We are told that "some" (possibly pre-Plotinian) (240.1–28) have made one proposition (λόγος) out of the two parts of the clause (κῶλον). For these interpreters, the definition of "being which is always" is "that which is apprehended by thought, always exists", and the definition of "becoming" is "that which is apprehended by a conjectural judgement founded on irrational sensation, which comes and goes is never really existing" (240.18–22). Proclus criticises this interpretation for including the term to be defined in the definition. This group essentially defines "being which always is" by "being which is identical to itself" (240.24–25) and being which becomes is defined according to "that which comes and goes and is never really existent", both of which contain the terms to be defined. Proclus calls this "a great ignorance of dialectic" (240.27–28). The second group of interpreters (Porphyry and Iamblichus?) marks a division in each κῶλον and so separates the definition from that which is to be defined (240.28–241.3). They say that in the first part the definition is "that which is apprehended by intellect", and what is to be defined is "always being"; in the second part, the definition is "that which is apprehended by a conjectural judgement founded on an irrational sensation", while the other words are the subject of the definition (240.30–34). This group receives approval from Syrianus (241.4).

Syrianus makes a text-critical reference (241.15), where he praises Plato for clarifying his argument through the addition of ὄντως and (in 241.17) καθὸ. His point is that Plato's text should be read carefully, as Plato argues precisely, using adverbs to clarify the meaning of important words. In this case, Plato shows, according to Syrianus, that coming into being is not "really" the same as being, whereas "always" refers to an eternal state.

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 310.3–311.1

Τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς ἅπαντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν [*Tim.* 28 C].

Τὰ μὲν οὖν τῶν παλαιῶν ἐξηγητῶν περὶ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ δόγματα τοιαῦτα ἄττα ἐστὶν ὡς συντόμως εἰπεῖν· ἃ δὲ καὶ τῷ ἡμετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι περὶ τούτου τεθεώρηται, φέρε, συνελόντες ἀναγράψωμεν, ἃ καὶ μάλιστα στοχάζεσθαι τῆς τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἡγούμεθα διανοίας. ἔστι τοίνυν ὁ δημιουργὸς ὁ εἷς κατ' αὐτὸν ὁ τὸ πέρας τῶν νοερῶν θεῶν ἀφορίζων θεὸς καὶ πληρούμενος μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν[a] μονάδων καὶ τῶν τῆς ζωῆς πηγῶν, προϊέμενος δὲ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τὴν ὅλην δημιουργίαν καὶ προστησάμενος μερικωτέρους τῶν ὅλων πατέρας, αὐτὸς δὲ ἀκίνητος ἐν τῇ κορυφῇ τοῦ Ὀλύμπου διαιωνίως ἱδρυμένος καὶ διττῶν κόσμων βασιλεύων ὑπερουρανίων τε καὶ οὐρανίων, ἀρχὴν δὲ καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλη τῶν ὅλων περιέχων· τῆς γὰρ δημιουργικῆς ἁπάσης διακοσμήσεως τὸ μέν ἐστι τῶν ὅλων ὁλικῶς δημιουργικὸν αἴτιον, τὸ δὲ τῶν μερῶν ὁλικῶς, τὸ δὲ τῶν ὅλων μερικῶς, τὸ δὲ τῶν μερῶν μερικῶς. τετραπλῆς δὲ τῆς δημιουργίας οὔσης ἡ δημιουργικὴ μονὰς εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἀνεδήσατο τὴν ὁλικὴν τῶν ὅλων πρόνοιαν, ἐξήρτηται δὲ αὐτῆς ἡ δημιουργικὴ[b] τριὰς ὁλικῶς ἐπιτροπεύουσα τὰ μέρη καὶ τὴν τῆς μονάδος διελομένη δύναμιν, ὥσπερ αὖ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἑτέρας τῆς μεριστῆς δημιουργίας ἡ μονὰς ἡγεῖται τῆς τριάδος, ἡ τὰ ὅλα μερικῶς τῆς τὰ μέρη μερικῶς διακοσμούσης· τῆς δὲ τριάδος τὸ σύμπαν πλῆθος περιχορεῦον αὐτὴν καὶ διαιρούμενον περὶ αὐτὴν καὶ μεριζόμενον αὐτῆς τὰς ποιήσεις καὶ πληρούμενον[c] ἀπ' αὐτῆς. ὥσπερ οὖν τῶν πολλῶν παραδειγμάτων ἡγεῖται τὸ ἕν, οὕτω καὶ τῶν πολλῶν δημιουργῶν ὁ εἷς, ἵνα πάντα ἀλλήλοις ἕπηται, τὸ ἓν παράδειγμα τὸ νοητόν, ὁ εἷς νοερὸς δημιουργός, ὁ εἷς μονογενὴς αἰσθητὸς κόσμος.

---

[a] **ἀφορίζων–νοητῶν** om N [b] **μονὰς–δημιουργικὴ** om C [c] **περὶ—πληρούμενον** om C

Now to discover the Maker and Father of this Universe were a task indeed; and having discovered Him, to declare Him unto all men were a thing impossible.

Such, then, in summary form, are the opinions of the ancient commentators concerning the Demiurge; come now, let us recount the theories of our Master on this question, which we consider particularly to accord with the thought of Plato. The Single Demiurge, according to him, is the god who defines the (upper) limit of the noeric gods and who, being filled by the noetic monads and the sources of life, while projecting from himself the entire demiurgic creation and assuming leadership over the more particular fathers of the universe, is established eternally motionless on the "summit of Olympus"[1] ruling at once over the two cosmoses, the hypercelestial and celestial, and embracing the beginning, middle, and end of all things.[2] In the demiurgic order as a whole, there is a demiurgic cause of whole things holistically, of parts holistically, of wholes, partially, and of parts partially. The demiurgic operation being thus four-fold, the demiurgic monad has attached to himself the universal providential care of wholes and from this there depends the demiurgic triad which governs parts in a universal manner and divides the power of the monad, just as, again, in the case of the second demiurgic level which is partial, the monad rules over the triad, that which organises the wholes partially ruling over what organises the parts partially, and the whole multiplicity [sc. of secondary beings] depends upon the triad, dancing around it and dividing itself about it and apportioning between them its creative activities and being filled by it. Just as, therefore, the one Paradigm rules over the many paradigms, so the unique Demiurge rules over the many demiurges in order that all things may follow upon each other, the unique noetic Model, the unique noeric Demiurge, the unique sensible universe.

[1] *Il.* XX 22.
[2] *Laws* IV 715 E.

Commentary

This fragment discusses the place of the Demiurge in Syrianus' structure of the cosmos, as well as how the placement of the Demiurge corresponds to his function. Syrianus' view is picked up by Proclus and appears in books 5 and 6 of the *Platonic Theology* which focus on the Syrianic opinion that at the level of particularity, demiurgic triads divide the power of the monad.

Before Proclus propounds the view of his master, he gives a lengthy doxography of the opinions of eight Platonists on the identity of the Demiurge. He sets out to consider who the Demiurge is and in what sort of class he is placed in the range of beings (303.27–310.2).

The first opinion considered is that of Numenius,[3] who posits three gods: the first is called "father", the second "creator" and the third "creation",[4] relating how the universe is a god (πατήρ-ποιητής-ποίημα)[5] (303.27–304.22).[6] The first god is assimilated to the Good as primary cause.[7] Numenius elaborates on this system in fr. 12 des Places, where he states that the first is not a creator, but is the father of demiurgic god (1–2).[8] This primal god is "inactive in respect of all works" (ἄργος ἔργων συμπάντων, 12, 13); however, the Demiurge leads through the heavens (ἡγεμονεῖν δι' οὐρανοῦ ἰόντα, 14).[9] In 304.7–22, Proclus lodges his

[3] This is included as Numenius fr. 21 des Places (Test. 24L, fr. 36, Thedinga).

[4] Dillon finds a problem with the identification of the "third god" here. Dillon says that while Proclus recognises the third god as the cosmos, it seems that in fr. 22 des Places it is identified with a world Soul as the lower aspect of the Demiurge. See Dillon, (2000) 341 note 8.

[5] He is also said to call these three πάπος, ἔγγονος, ἀπόγονος (304.4).

[6] Numenius claims that Socrates first conjectured three gods, fr. 24 (1.L.) 1.51 (= Eusebius, *P.E.* XIV, 5, 6, p. 728 c Viger): τρεῖς θεοὺς τιθεμένου Σωκράτους…. Cf. Puech (1934) 745–778. Numenius finds further justification in the Pseudo-Platonic *Ep.* 2, 312 E 1–4.

[7] des Places argues that Numenius here contradicts *Tim.* 28 E 3 where ποιητής precedes πατήρ; cf. Festugière (1954) 276, n. 1: "Numénius a… tort d'assimiler 'Père' au Bien. Car, d'une part, c'est l'accoupler à ποιητής et, d'autre part, c'est le faire passer au second rang puisque ποιητής vient d'abord chez Platon." See also Numenius fr. 16 des Places, where the primal god as Good is the first principle of Being, while the Demiurge is in the realm of becoming.

[8] Οὔτε δημιουργεῖν ἐστι χρεὼν τὸν πρῶτον.

[9] This dichotomy is continued in Numenius fr. 15 des Places, where the primary god is at rest and concerns himself with the intelligible realm, while the Demiurge is in motion and is concerned with the intelligible and sensible realms. For more discussion on Numenius and the Demiurge, see Dillon (2000) 340–341 and des Places's introductory section on the theology of Numenius (1973) 10–14.

criticism against this understanding of the Demiurge. Proclus argues that in Plato, "father" is in the second rank after "creator." Moreover, Numenius places the transcendent and that which is below the transcendent on the same rank. Proclus says that it is necessary that these be placed below the first. Next, Proclus argues that Numenius must not identify the paternal principle of the universe to the first principle, since the paternal principle should reside in the two classes that come after the First Principle. Third, Proclus does not accept a distinction between "father" and "creator", and holds that Plato uses these two names for the same god.

The next opinions given are those of Harpocration, a student of Atticus (304.22–305.6), followed by Atticus (305.6–16). Harpocration follows Numenius in his doctrine of the three gods, naming the first god "Heaven" and "Chronos", the second god "Zeus" and "Zan", and the third "heaven" and "universe" (304.27–28). He calls the first God "Zeus" and "king of the intelligible" and the second "leader". The first god is the father, first principle of the *Parmenides* of whom every property is denied. Atticus identifies the Demiurge with the Good, calling it "good", but not "the Good." In this way, the Good is the cause of every essence and is beyond Being. Proclus finds fault with this, however, in so far as the Paradigm is placed before the Demiurge and is more elevated in dignity to the Good.[10]

After the three Middle Platonists, Proclus gives an account of the Plotinian Demiurge (305.16–306.1), which appears to be based on *Ennead* III. 9. 1. In this treatise, Plotinus associates the Demiurge with Intellect, which gives form to soul, the maker of the visible universe.[11] According to Proclus, Plotinus rightly posits two demiurges, one in the intelligible realm, the other the Leader of the Universe (305.19–20). He identifies the Demiurge with the encosmic Nous, the region between the One and the universe (305.25),[12] and never associates the Demiurge with the One.[13] Porphyry (306.31–307.14) agrees with Plotinus, but clarifies his thinking so that the Demiurge is not the Intellect, but the hypercosmic Soul.

[10] See Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 8 Wear.

[11] On Plotinus' *Enn*. III.9.1, see Armstrong (1983) 410, note 1. Armstrong says that *nous* and *to zoōn* must be distinguished as Intellect from object. See *Enn*. V.5 on the relation of Intellect to ideas.

[12] 305.25.

[13] Plotinus, *Enn*. II.1.5.5; II.3.18; II.4.7; IV.4, 9. He attributes the association of *nous* and Demiurge to Plato in *Enn*. 5.1.8. See Dillon (2000) 342.

Plotinus criticises Porphyry and does not equate Soul with Demiurge (307.4–5).[14]

Amelius' interpretation follows that of Plotinus (306.1–31); he imagines three demiurges, three intellects, and three kings: he who is, he who has, and he who sees (ἔστι-ἔχει-ὁρᾷ), an exegesis of *Tim.* 39 E 8.[15] Amelius bases this on the three kings of Plato's *Second Letter*, 312 E 1–4 (306. 12) and the three Orphic gods: Phanes, Ouranos, and Kronos (*OF* 96).[16]

Iamblichus refutes the opinion of Porphyry (307.15–17)[17] by showing that his understanding of the Demiurge is not Plotinian. Iamblichus calls the Demiurge the intelligible universe, which Proclus finds more Plotinian than Porphyry's analysis (307.19). Following this interpretation, Proclus cites Iamblichus as having written a more accurate (ἀκριβέστερον) work on the Demiurge entitled, "On the Discourse of Zeus in the *Timaeus*." In this treatise, which Syrianus parallels in his commentary of *Tim.* 28 C, Iamblichus makes the Demiurge the third among the fathers in the intellectual hebdomad, after the triads of intelligible gods and intelligible-intellective gods (308.19–23).[18] As with Plotinus, Iamblichus places the Demiurge in the realm of Intellect as opposed to the realm of Soul, where Porphyry places it. More precisely, Iamblichus locates the Demiurge third in the intellectual triad of Kronos-Rhea-Zeus. Iamblichus says that the Demiurge "gathers into one and holds in subjection to himself" the intelligible realm.[19] This hebdomadic structure of intellect reappears in Proclus' *Platonic Theology* V 2. Here, Proclus describes a monad overseeing two triads, the first of which is "the fathers"

[14] Porphyry appeals to *Tim.* 35 A, on the creation of the soul linked to the creation of the divided nature.

[15] Dillon (2000) 342. See also Dillon (1969) 64.

[16] Proclus, *In Tim.* 3.103.18 ff. on *Tim.* 39 E, Amelius' source for his triad of demiurgic intellects—the first, "he who is" (based on the phrase, "the really existing living being"), the second, "he who possesses" (based on "existing in"), and the third, "he who sees" (based on the word "behold" in the text). See Dillon (1969) 65.

[17] Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 34 Dillon.

[18] "That Iamblichus was speaking more generally here, but dealt with the position of the demiurge more accurately elsewhere, may be gathered from the following: when composing his essay, 'On the Speech of Zeus in the *Timaeus*', following on the intelligible triads and the three triads of [intelligible and] intellectual gods, he allots the Demiurge the third rank among the fathers in the intellectual hebdomad." Translation: Dillon (2000) 343. It is interesting that Proclus' hebdomadic structure finds its roots in Iamblichus' demiurgic hebdomad, which seems to have been made into a structure of seven so as to mimic, or rather, to prefigure, the seven planets. See Julian's *Hymn to King Helios* where the intermediate level is also hebdomadic.

[19] Dillon (1973) 38.

who preside over the activity of the Intellect, the second are the "uncontaminated entities" (or implacable gods) who guard each father individually.[20] In the first triad, the first father oversees essence, the second life, and the third father is the Demiurge proper, who oversees *nous*.

Syrianus' interpretation of this passage appears to be drawn from Iamblichus, who returns the Demiurge to the realm of Intellect, rather than Soul. Syrianus states the following characteristics of the Demiurge which establishes his cosmic place (310.8–15): the Demiurge is at the upper limit of the noeric gods, he is filled by noetic monads; he assumes leadership over particular fathers; he is motionless; and he rules over the hypercelestial and celestial realms. Syrianus establishes that the Demiurge is at the level of Intellect[21]—as such, he is transcendent, and hence, motionless—and his causal activity must be mediated.[22] Because the activity of the Demiurge requires mediation, Syrianus mentions a series of "more particular" fathers in the hypercelestial and celestial realms. What follows, then, is a discussion of demiurgic activity based on the structure Syrianus sets forth. The demiurgic monad, who projects from himself creation, rules over the demiurgic fathers, who form a triad. This triad flows from the monad and depends upon it, so that the two levels are inter-connected. The relationship between monad and triad is described as a curious four-fold power, the demiurgic cause of:

1. Wholes holistically: τῶν ὅλων ὁλικῶς
2. Parts holistically: τῶν μερῶν ὁλικῶς
3. Wholes partially: τῶν ὅλων μερικῶς
4. Parts partially: τῶν μερῶν μερικῶς

These four powers are divided into two demiurgic levels (310.18–20)—that which pertains to the monad, and that which is particular to the triad. The first power listed is that of the monad—the monad has universal care of the whole (he imposes order on the whole universe in a universal manner);[23] the highest element of the demiurgic triad orders the universals in an individualising manner (he distinguishes the totality

[20] On Proclus' hebdomad, see Siorvanes (1996) 150–151.

[21] Plato, *Tim.* 39 E 7–9; Intellect transmits power of the higher realm to the physical realm, which is precisely the activity of the Demiurge. As discussed earlier, Syrianus was not the first to place the Demiurge at the level of Intellect. Plotinus placed him at the hypostasis of Intellect, as did Iamblichus.

[22] Opsomer (2000) 116.

[23] This is the reading Dillon (2000) 344–345, note 18.

of creation into genera and species);[24] then, the two remaining demiurgic "fathers" are said to engage in division into parts in a universalising mode (or to firm up the connections of species);[25] and to link parts to wholes in a partial manner (establish the individuality of the individual). The partial forms of demiurgy associated with the triad are dependent on the monad.

Proclus readily adopts Syrianus' demiurgic structure. In *Platonic Theology* V, Proclus describes an intellectual hebdomad, an elaboration of the one set forth by Iamblichus. The Demiurge exists in the Intellect, which is broken into a triad whose members are given the Orphic names, Kronos-Rhea-Zeus.[26] The Demiurge is Zeus (the intellective-intellect, or lower limit of the first intellective triad) because it alone is capable of the reversion necessary to impose forms.[27] The demiurgic function is lower because it needs a proper mix of distinction and unity for its creation.[28] Zeus as the intellective-intellect is head of two triads of demiurges—one in the hypercosmic realm, the other in the encosmic—as well as "the seventh divinity," separating the demiurges from the sensible realm. The internal structure of the two triads, moreover, mimics that of the monad's relationship to its own place in the Intellect: namely, each triad has its own monad. The hyperocosmic triad is headed by Zeus-Poseidon-Pluto, followed by a hypercosmic-encosmic triad, headed by Zeus-Poseidon-Hephaistos.[29]

While Syrianus characteristically divides the function of the Demiurge into categories, he makes a point of having one Demiurge who presides over a multiplicity of demiurges (the Demiurge in the most specific sense being Zeus.) Syrianus holds true to the *Timaeus*' visible cosmos, which Plato describes as one because it is trying to be a copy of the Paradigm. The noetic cosmos is likewise one because the Demiurge contemplates it as a Paradigm, with the result that it possesses the uniqueness of the creator.

---

[24] Dillon interprets the passage in this way (2000) 344–345, note 18.

[25] Again, Dillon's interpretation in (2000) 344, note 18.

[26] Based on the *Gorgias* myth, whereby Zeus, Poseidon and Pluto divided the kingdom of fate into three parts (523A3–5).

[27] Zeus is the third father, after Kronos (who could not be Demiurge because he is too unified), and Rhea (who cannot bring about reversion). Proclus, *PT* V 13. p. 42, 19–22.

[28] Dillon (2000) 345.

[29] Opsomer has drawn a nice chart of this (2000) 131.

SYRIANUS, *IN TIM.* FR. 7

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 314.22–315.4

Τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς ἅπαντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν [*Tim.* 28 C].

εἰ τοίνυν ὁ Ζεύς ἐστιν ὁ τὸ ἓν κράτος ἔχων, ὁ τὸν Φάνητα καταπιών, ἐν ᾧ πρώτως αἱ νοηταὶ τῶν ὅλων αἰτίαι, ὁ πάντα παράγων κατὰ τὰς ὑποθήκας τῆς Νυκτός, ὁ τοῖς θεοῖς τὰς ἐξουσίας παραδιδοὺς τοῖς τε ἄλλοις καὶ τοῖς τρισὶ Κρονίδαις, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ κόσμου παντὸς εἷς καὶ ὅλος δημιουργός, πέμπτην ἔχων ἐν τοῖς βασιλεῦσι τάξιν, ὡς καὶ τοῦτο ἀποδέδεικται τῷ ἡμετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι δαιμονίως ἐν ταῖς Ὀρφικαῖς συνουσίαις καὶ σύστοιχος ὢν Οὐρανῷ καὶ Φάνητι, διὸ καὶ ποιητής ἐστι καὶ πατὴρ καὶ ὁλικῶς ἑκάτερον.

Commentary

According to the *Suda*, Syrianus authored two works regarding Orphic theology: *On the Theology of Orpheus* and *On the Agreement of Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato*. The passage above is interesting because it alerts us to the fact that Syrianus held Orphic seminars in which the *Theology* was discussed.[2] In the following passage from Marinus' *Life of Proclus*, it seems that Proclus' own commentary on the subject was taken from notes on the writings of Syrianus:

[2] On Orpheus as a theologian, see Manolea (2004) 182; Hermias, *In Phaedr.* 147.18–148.1.

Now to discover the Maker and Father of this Universe were a task indeed; and having discovered Him, to declare Him unto all men were a thing impossible.

If then Zeus is the one who is holding unitary power, he who swallowed Phanes, in whom primally are situated the intelligible causes of the universe, producing everything according to the instructions of Night, and transmitted these powers to the gods, and in particular to the three offspring of Kronos, it is he who is the single and universal Creator of the entire cosmos, holding the fifth rank among the Kings, as has been demonstrated marvellously well by our master in his Orphic seminars,[1] and of like rank with Ouranos and Phanes, on which account he is both "creator" and "father", and each universally.

[1] *sunousia* can refer to conversations; see Plato, *Sph*. 217 E, *Smp*. 176 E; *La*. 201 C; *Phd*. 111 B; as well as intercourse with a teacher and attendance at his teaching: *Plt*. 285 C. See Frede (2009) 29.

> "Once when I was reading the works of Orpheus with him, and hearing in his exegeses not only what is in Iamblichus and Syrianus but further material, apter to theology, I asked the philosopher not to leave such an inspired poem unexplained but to write a fuller commentary on this too [in addition to the Chaldean Oracles].[3] He said that he had often felt an urge to write one, but had been prevented by dreams in which he had seen his teacher deterring him with threats. I thought of a way round, and proposed that he should mark the passages in his tutor's volumes which he approved. He acquiesced (image of goodness that he was), and marked the commentaries in the margins. We collected the passages together, and thus obtained his notes and comments on quite a number of verses of

[3] On Proclus and the Chaldean Oracles, see Saffrey (1981).

> Orpheus, even if he did not manage to make up the whole of the divine mythology or all of the *Rhapsodies*."[4]

Marinus terms the Orphic poems "Rhapsodies" after the *Hieroi Logoi in 24 Rhapsodies* listed in the *Suda* as a work authored by Orpheus.[5] According to M.L. West, the Orphic theogony that was discussed by the late Platonists was based on this "Rhapsodic Theogony", whose story differed somewhat from other prevailing theogonies.[6] It appears from the Marinus passage above that the exegesis of Syrianus on the Orphic poems largely agreed with that of Proclus. Proclus' comments that he feared writing a full commentary on the poems are strange. Centrally, they are in the form of dreams—which Proclus often uses to reinforce what he does or does not want—as a way to pay respect to his teacher. It seems that Syrianus' teachings on the subject were not exclusively oral, as there existed "volumes" of his opinions on the topic. It is possible that the volumes were the products of Syrianus' oral teaching, and that he did not want authority given to them through the use of a secondary commentary written by Proclus.[7] This passage from Marinus is delightful because it tells us rather explicitly just how Proclus went about his method of commentary-making: he marked the passages from his master's volumes (or notes from another student on Syrianus' teaching) and then collected his own notes and commentary on his master's teachings.

In this passage from Syrianus, as well as Proclus' own recounting of Orphic theology, Zeus is named as the Demiurge (313.5), a monadic principle in the universe (313.2) that preceded the other children of Kronos (314.26). He is the fifth king of the gods, after Aeon, Night, the noetic/noeric cosmos, and Aether (Phanes, Night, Ouranos, and Kronos) (314.28).[8]

---

[4] Marinus' *Life of Proclus* 27, trans. Rosán (1949) 19. L. Brisson notes that this passage is difficult to translate because of the verb παραγράφειν, which he interprets as Proclus taking notes from lectures, which were then elaborated upon in the margins of the notes. See Brisson (1985) 49.

[5] West (1983) 27.

[6] Proclus mentions the *Rhapsodies* 139 times in the *Timaeus* Commentary. On Proclus' use of the *Rhapsodies*, see Brisson (1985) 34ff.

[7] Proclus' marginal notes could have been considerable enough to be a commentary in themselves. Di Sarzana makes this argument (1978) 17–40.

[8] See Scholia, p. 474, Diehl *In Tim.* 1:

πρῶτος βασιλεὺς ὁ Φάνης· ὁ γὰρ αἰὼν καὶ πρώτος τριὰς ὑπερ τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως εἰσι τάξιν. δεύτερος βασιλεὺς ἡ Νύξ, ἡ πρώτη τῶν νοητῶν ἅμα καὶ νοερῶν τριάδων. τέταρτος ὁ Αἰθήρ, ἡ τρίτη τῶν αὐτῶν τριάς. πέμπτος ὁ Ζεύς.

According to the *Theogony*, Zeus first learns that he is destined to be the fifth king of the gods (*OF* 105, 107) when he is hiding in the cave of Night to escape Kronos' swallowing him and he is instructed on how to overcome Kronos (*OF* 154). In *Orphic Fragments* 165–166, Zeus asks Night how he can order the world so as to preserve the unity of the world, while not destroying its individuality: "How shall all things be one, yet each divine?"

> Night answered:
>
> Catch all in infinite aither round about,
> there in the sky, the boundless earth, the sea,
> and therein all the encircling signs of heaven.
> When you have strung a firm bond round them all,
> to the aither fasten a golden chain.[9]

This chain unifies all multiplicity in the world by placing the contents of the universe in a connected link of nature, soul and intellect that comes to represent a series of encosmic gods (314.14–27). Not only does Zeus as the Demiurge unify the universe through the golden chain, but he unifies the universe within himself because he contains all the forms.[10] According to the *Rhapsodic Theogony*, Demeter arranged a banquet (*OF* 189) where Zeus castrated a drunk Kronos (*OF* 137). After this takeover, Zeus swallowed Phanes, reuniting aether, heaven, sea, and earth in his belly (*OF* 58, 82, 85, 129). Proclus' refers to *OF* 167 in which Zeus contains the aether, heaven, water, earth, ocean and the gods, once he has absorbed Phanes (313.9–17). According to Brisson, who interprets this passage,[11] the swallowing of Phanes is important in the exegesis of Syrianus, and later Proclus, because Phanes is identified not only with the intelligible model, but with the αὐτοζῷον (*OF* 167), the third member of the third triad of intelligibles[12] who produces the sum of all the living things and who embraces all.[13] The, also the αὐτοζῷον exemplary cause,

[9] C.f. *Il.* 8.19.

[10] Chrysippus gives a Stoic account of this: "that the whole of existence is unified because of a breath which extends throughout it, by which the universe is held together and remains together, and whose changes it shares." (*SVF* ii. 154. 17).

[11] Brisson (1985) 78. See also his discussion on the place of Phanes in Syrianus' thought in (2009) 481 where he looks at comments on the Phaedrus (Proclus, in Phaedr. 146, 24–147, 6), in particular, as a place where Syrianus corresponds the intelligible universe to Phanes, once he is swallowed by Zeus.

[12] Damascius, *De Princip*. Ruelle I 317.6–7. Phanes is the primordial egg, the third member of the triad Metis, Erikopaios, and Phanes.

[13] Brisson *ibid*.

swallows Phanes so that he contains everything as an ideal form (313.8; 17) and embraces the entire universe (*OF* 168). Zeus swallowing Phanes is thus the appropriation by the Demiurge of the intelligible model which directs creative action.[14] In this respect, Zeus is the intellective monad because he contains everything (314.1–2). He is demiurgic in so far as he brings everything forth again to create the current world (*OF* 168).

This fragment relates to Fr. 6 above, as here what we really see is a further elaboration of the Demiurge as Intellect. Syrianus connects the Orphic tale of Phanes and Zeus with the *Timaeus*, and draws a more complex picture of the Intellect which he introduces in 1.310.3 ff. Proclus elaborates this further, making Phanes part of the second and third intelligible-intellective triads. In *Platonic Theology* V, 5–32, Proclus equates an Orphic divinity with each member of the hebdomad. He identifies Being, Life, and Mind with Kronos, Rhea and Zeus. He associated Kronos with Being (intellect fire) (*OF* 128, 137, 151, 155) and interprets Kronos' castration of his father and his own castration.[15] Rhea, Zeus' wife, is the source of repose and motion, and Zeus is the source of identity and otherness (*PT* V, 12).

In 314.28 ff., Syrianus says that Zeus is the fifth king of the gods. While it is impossible to know whether Syrianus already had a detailed metaphysics in place regarding Zeus, Proclus explains such a structure.[16] The first Zeus is the monadic demiurge, the ruler of the world, the third king, with Kronos and Rhea, of the intellectual hebdomad;[17] kings four and five could refer to the second Zeus (monad of the hypercosmic triad) and the third Zeus (monad of the hypercosmic-encosmic gods).[18] Both Syrianus and Proclus equate the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* with Zeus, who occupies the lower limit of the first intellective triad as the third position in the triad of Being-Life-Intellect. Syrianus, it seems, corresponds orphic figures to levels of the universe.[19]

---

[14] Brisson *ibid*.

[15] Brisson (1985) 76.

[16] Proclus, *PT* VI, 6, p. 29.6–23; VI, 8, p. 37.4–10; VI, 9, pp. 17–20.

[17] On Syrianus and the intellectual hebdomad, see Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 11 Wear. See also Dillon (2000) 343. Dillon summarises Iamblichus' opinion on the subject in Iamblichus, *In Tim*, fr. 34 Dillon (= 1, 307, 14 ff.).

[18] On the place of Zeus in Syrianus' hierarchy of gods, see Manolea (2009) 502–503.

[19] See the elaborate chart detailing the correspondence between Orphic figures and the Syrianic cosmos in Brisson (2009) pp. 496–497. On the place of Zeus in Syrianus' hierarchy of gods, see Manolea (2009) 502–503.

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 322.18–325.11

Τόδε δ' οὖν πάλιν ἐπισκεπτέον περὶ αὐτοῦ, πρὸς πότερον τῶν παραδειγμάτων ὁ τεκτηνάμενος αὐτὸν ἀπειργάζετο, πότερον ὡς πρὸς τὸ κατὰ ταὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχον ἢ πρὸς τὸ γεγονός [*Tim.* 28C–29A].

ὁ δέ γε ἡμέτερος καθηγεμὼν κατὰ τὴν ἔνθεον ἑαυτοῦ νοήσιν καὶ τόδε τῆς προσηκούσης διαίτης ἠξίωσεν· ἐπεὶ γὰρ τῶν παλαιῶν οἳ μὲν αὐτὸν[a] τὸν δημιουργὸν ἐποίησαν ἔχοντα τὰ παραδείγματα τῶν ὅλων, ὡς Πλωτῖνος, οἳ δὲ οὐκ αὐτόν,[b] ἀλλ' ἤτοι πρὸ αὐτοῦ τὸ παράδειγμα, ἢ μετ' αὐτόν, πρὸ αὐτοῦ μὲν ὡς ὁ Πορφύριος, μετ' αὐτὸν δὲ ὡς ὁ Λογγῖνος, ἠρώτα, πότερον ὁ δημιουργὸς εὐθὺς μετὰ τὸ ἕν ἐστιν, ἢ[c] καὶ ἄλλαι τάξεις εἰσὶ νοηταὶ μεταξὺ τοῦ τε δημιουργοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἑνός· εἰ μὲν γὰρ μετὰ τὸ ἕν ὁ δημιουργός, ἄτοπον τὸ σύμπαν εἶναι τῶν νοητῶν πλῆθος μετὰ τὸ ἀπλήθυντον· διὰ γὰρ τῶν τῷ ἑνὶ προσεχῶν ἀριθμῶν ἡ πρόοδος ἡ ἐπὶ τὸν ὅλον ἀριθμὸν καὶ τὸ ὅλον πλῆθος. εἰ δὲ καὶ ἄλλαι μεταξὺ τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τάξεις εἰσί, πότερον ἐν αὐτῷ πρώτῳ τὸ παράδειγμα τοῦ παντὸς ἢ μετ' αὐτὸν ἢ πρὸ αὐτοῦ ζητητέον· εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ πρώτῳ, πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν πλῆθος ἐν αὐτῷ θήσομεν· τὸ γὰρ τῶν νοουμένων κάλλιστον τὸ παράδειγμά ἐστιν· ὥστε πάλιν ἔσται νοητὸς καὶ οὐ[d] νοερός, ὃ μικρῷ πρότερον ἀπεδείκνυμεν.

καίτοι τὸ μὲν παράδειγμα μόνας ἰδέας ἔχει τέτταρας, αὐτὸς δὲ καὶ τὰς ἔτι μερικωτέρας ἐκείνων, ἡλίου, σελήνης, ἑκάστου τῶν ἀιδίων. εἰ δὲ μετ' αὐτόν, ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον ἐστραμμένος ἔσται καὶ τὸ ἀτιμότερον, ὃ

[a] **αὐτὸν** CN: **αὐτὼν** P [b] **οὐ κατ' αὐτὸν** N [c] **ἢ** CN: **εἰ** P [d] **οὐ** om C

However, let us return and inquire further concerning the Cosmos,—after which of the Models did its Architect construct it? Was it after that which is self-identical and uniform, or after that which has come into existence?

Coming to our Master, this time again, in virtue of his own divinely-inspired way of thinking, he has thought it proper to apply to the subject the appropriate treatment. For, whereas, of the ancients, some, such as Plotinus, have asserted that the Demiurge himself contains the Paradigms of the universe, while others have placed the Paradigm prior to the Demiurge or after him—prior, as Porphyry does, or after him, as does Longinus—Syrianus raises the question whether the Demiurge comes immediately after the One or if there are other intelligible intermediaries between the Demiurge and the One. If, in effect, the Demiurge comes after the One, it is odd that the total multiplicity of the intelligibles comes directly after a non-multiplicity. For it is through the intermediacy of numbers immediately contiguous to the One that there occurs the procession towards the total sum of number and total multiplicity. But, if there are other classes of being between the One and the Demiurge, we must ask if the Paradigm of the universe is in the Demiurge principally or after him or before him.[1] If the Paradigm is in him principally, we can place him in the sum of intelligibles: since the Paradigm is the most beautiful of intelligible beings. So that, again, the Demiurge would be intelligible, and not intellective, as we demonstrated a little earlier [310.29].

However, the Paradigm contains only four forms, while the Demiurge contains forms rather more partially than these: one of the sun, moon, and each of the eternal beings. But if [the Paradigm] [comes] after the Demiurge, it will be turned towards the inferior and less honorable,

[1] γάρ is used here with the nominative and indicative, possibly indicating Proclus' agreement with Syrianus.

μηδενὶ τῶν θείων ὑπάρξαι θέμις· ὥστε πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὸ παράδειγμά ἐστιν. ἀλλ' εἰ πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ, πότερον ὁρᾶται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἢ οὐχ ὁρᾶται; τὸ μὲν οὖν μὴ ὁρᾶσθαι λέγειν καὶ τοῦ Πλάτωνός ἐστιν ἀνήκοον καὶ τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων φύσεως· ἄτοπον γὰρ τὴν μὲν ἡμετέραν ψυχὴν ὁρᾶν ἐκεῖνο καὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγειν, νοῦν δὲ καὶ τὸν ὅλον νοῦν μὴ ὁρᾶν. εἰ δὲ ὁρᾷ τὸ νοητὸν ὁ δημιουργός, πότερον εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐστραμμένος ὁρᾷ, ἢ ἔξω μόνον ἑαυτοῦ; ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν ἔξω μόνον ἑαυτοῦ, εἴδωλα ὁρᾷ τοῦ ὄντος καὶ ἕξει αἴσθησιν ἀντὶ νοήσεως· εἰ δὲ εἰς ἑαυτόν, ἔστι καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ νοούμενον· ὥστε καὶ πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὸ παράδειγμά ἐστι καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ, νοητῶς μὲν πρὸ αὐτοῦ, νοερῶς δὲ ἐν αὐτῷ.[a]

δοκεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ῥήματα ποτὲ μὲν ἕτερον αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν τὸ παράδειγμα, ποτὲ δὲ ταὐτόν· ὅταν μὲν γὰρ λέγῃ [39E] τό· ᾗπερ οὖν νοῦς ἐνούσας ἰδέας ἐν τῷ ὅ ἐστι ζῷον, ὅσαι τε καὶ οἷαι καθορᾷ, τοσαύτας διενοήθη καὶ τόδε τὸ πᾶν σχεῖν, ὡς ἕτερον τοῦ παραδείγματος τὸν δημιουργὸν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτοζῷον ἀνατείνεσθαί φησι, καὶ αὖ ὅταν φῇ [30C]· τίνι τῶν ζῴων αὐτὸν εἰς ὁμοιότητα ὁ συνιστὰς συνέστησε; τῶν μὲν ἐν μέρους εἴδει πεφυκότων, μηδενὶ καταξιώσωμεν· οὗ[b] δέ ἐστι τὰ ἄλλα ζῷα καθ' ἓν καὶ κατὰ γένη μόρια, τούτῳ πάντων ὁμοιότατον αὐτὸν εἶναι τιθῶμεν· καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτοις διορίζει τὸ συνιστὰν ἀπὸ τοῦ παραδείγματος. ὅταν γε μὴν πάλιν διαρρήδην λέγῃ [29E] τό· ἀγαθὸς ἦν, ἀγαθῷ δὲ οὐδεὶς περὶ οὐδενὸς οὐδέποτε ἐγγίγνεται[c] φθόνος· τούτου δὲ ἐκτὸς ὤν, πάντα ὅτι μάλιστα ἠβουλήθη γενέσθαι παραπλήσια αὑτῷ, δηλοῦν φαίνεται τὴν τοῦ δημιουργοῦ πρὸς τὸ παράδειγμα ταυτότητα·

ὥστε καὶ ὁ Πλάτων ἔστι μὲν ὅπῃ ταὐτόν, ἔστι δὲ καὶ ὅπῃ φησὶν ἕτερον, καὶ τούτοιν ἑκάτερον εἰκότως· νοητῶς μὲν γάρ εἰσιν αἱ ἰδέαι πρὸ τῆς δημιουργίας, τέτταρες ἰδεῶν μονάδες, πρόεισι δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸν δημιουργὸν ἡ εἰδητικὴ τάξις, καὶ ἔστι μία τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ μονάδων ὁ τῶν ἰδεῶν ὅλος ἀριθμός.

ταῦτα δὲ καὶ ὁ Ὀρφεὺς [frg. 120] ἐνδεικνύμενος καταπίνεσθαι τὸν νοητὸν θεὸν ἔφατο παρὰ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τῶν ὅλων· καὶ ὁ μὲν Πλάτων βλέπειν εἰς τὸ παράδειγμα τὸν δημιουργὸν ὑπέθετο, τὴν νόησιν διὰ τῆς

[a] **νοητῶς–αὐτῷ** om P [b] **οὗ** CN: **οὐ** P [c] **ἐγγίγνεται** N: **γίνεται** P

which is not lawful to assert about any of the divine beings, so that the Paradigm must be above the Demiurge. But if it is prior to the Demiurge, is it seen by the Demiurge or not? To say that it is not seen is to be ignorant of the doctrine of Plato and of the nature of reality. For if our soul sees that [Paradigm] and is able to speak about it, it is absurd to suggest that intellect, and especially the universal Intellect, does not see it. But if the Demiurge sees the Intelligible, does he see it by reflecting on himself or only as an object exterior to him? But if he only sees it as an object exterior to him, he sees images of being, and he has sensation instead of intellection. But if he sees it by reflecting upon himself, the thing that he is contemplating is also in himself. So the Paradigm will be both prior to the Demiurge and with him on the intelligible level, but in him on the intellective.

And indeed the actual text of Plato sometimes makes the Paradigm different from the Demiurge, but on other occasions makes it identical to it. For when he says [39 E], "According, then, as Reason perceives Forms existing in the absolute living creature, such and so many exist therein, so many did he deem that this world should possess" on the assumption that the Demiurge is different from the Paradigm, he speaks of him as striving towards the Essential Living Being. And again when he says, [30 C 4], "In the likeness of which of the living creatures did the constructor of the cosmos construct it? We shall not deign to accept any of those which belong by nature to the category of 'parts', for nothing that resembles the imperfect would ever became fair. But we shall affirm that the cosmos, more than anything else, resembles most closely that living creature of which all other living creatures, severally and generically, are portions." Here he separates the "constructing" element from the Paradigm. But again, when he says the following explicitly [29E], "He was good and in him that is good no envy comes about concerning anything ever; and being without envy he desired that all should be, so far as possible, like himself," he seems to indicate that there is an identity between the Demiurge and the Paradigm.

So that Plato says in one place that they are the same, while in another he says that they are different, and each of these statements is reasonable. Since the forms are prior to the Demiurge on the noetic levels, i.e. the four monads of the forms, but the system of forms proceeds also into the Demiurge, and one of the monads with him is the sum-total of forms.

This is what Orpheus [*OF* 167a Kern] indicates when he says that the noetic god is swallowed by the creator of the universe. And Plato postulates that the creator looks to the Paradigm, indicating intellection

ὁράσεως ἐνδεικνύμενος, ὁ δὲ θεολόγος καὶ οἷον ἐπιπηδᾶν αὐτὸν τῷ νοητῷ καὶ καταπίνειν, ὡς ὁ μῦθος ἔφησεν· ἔστι γάρ, εἰ χρὴ διαρρήδην τὰ τοῦ καθηγεμόνος λέγειν, ὁ παρὰ τῷ Ὀρφεῖ Πρωτόγονος θεὸς κατὰ τὸ πέρας τῶν νοητῶν ἱδρυμένος παρὰ τῷ Πλάτωνι τὸ αὐτοζῷον· διὸ καὶ αἰώνιόν ἐστι καὶ τῶν νοουμένων κάλλιστον, καὶ τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν νοητοῖς, ὅπερ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐν νοεροῖς· πέρας γὰρ ἑκάτερος τῶνδε τῶν τάξεων, καὶ ὃ μὲν τῶν παραδειγματικῶν αἰτίων τὸ πρώτιστον, ὃ δὲ τῶν δημιουργικῶν τὸ μοναδικώτατον· διὸ καὶ ἑνοῦται πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ὁ Ζεὺς διὰ μέσης τῆς Νυκτὸς καὶ πληρωθεὶς ἐκεῖθεν γίνεται[a] κόσμος νοητὸς ὡς ἐν νοεροῖς.

> ὣς τότε Πρωτογόνοιο χανὼν μένος Ἠρικεπαίου
> τῶν πάντων δέμας εἶχεν ἑῇ ἐνὶ γαστέρι κοίλῃ,
> μῖξε δ' ἑοῖς μελέεσσι θεοῦ δύναμίν τε καὶ ἀλκήν,
> τοὔνεκα σὺν τῷ πάντα Διὸς πάλιν ἐντὸς ἐτύχθη.

εἰκότως ἄρα καὶ νῦν ὁ Πλάτων εἰς τὸ παράδειγμα βλέποντά φησι δημιουργεῖν αὐτόν, ἵνα τῷ νοεῖν ἐκεῖνο πάντα γενόμενος τὸν αἰσθητὸν ὑποστήσηται κόσμον· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἦν νοητῶς πᾶν, αὐτὸς δὲ νοερῶς πᾶν, ὁ δὲ κόσμος αἰσθητῶς πᾶν· διὸ καὶ ὁ θεολόγος φησί·

> πάντα τάδε κρύψας αὖθις φάος ἐς πολυγηθές
> μέλλεν ἀπὸ κραδίης προφέρειν πάλι θέσκελα ῥέζων.

[a] **προτόγόνιο** C sic: **πρωτογόνων** P: **πρωτόγονος** N

through talk of vision, while the theologian portrays the Demiurge as leaping upon the object of the intellect and swallowing it down, as the myth says. For, if we may refer directly to the teaching of our Master, the god Protogonos, according to Orpheus, established at the limit of the intelligibles, is the Essential Living Being, according to Plato. That is why he is, eternal and the "most beautiful of the intelligible beings" [30 D 2] and he is among the intelligible realities, just what Zeus is among the intellective. For each is the limit of their reproductive orders, the one being the first of the paradigmatic causes, the other the most unitary of the demiurgic causes. On account of this, Zeus is united to that one [Protogonos] through the intermediary of Night, having been filled from this source, and hence becomes an intelligible universe on the level of the intellective [*OF* 167a1–4], so

> "As Zeus swallowed the force of the First-Born Erikepaios, he held in his own belly the body of all things, he mixes with his own members the power and strength of the gods, on account of which, together with him, everything comes to be again within Zeus."

Quite reasonably, then, does Plato now say that he creates while looking to the Paradigm, in order that having become everything by intelligizing he should establish the sensible universe. The Paradigm, then, is all things in an intelligible mode, the Demiurge in an intellective mode, and the universe is everything in a perceptible mode. And hence, the Theologian says,

> "After having hidden all these things, he was once more about to bring them into the joyful light from his heart, performing again wondrous acts."

Commentary

This topic answers Plato's question as to what class of being the Paradigm of the universe belongs. Prior to this query, Proclus established that the Demiurge is a god and the process of creation is eternal (319.1 ff.). He further postulated that the universe had been created following a Paradigm; this is because the creator, if he wishes to create according to an ordered plan, must have the idea of the object he wishes to create (320.21). Deliberation on the genre of the Paradigm for both Syrianus and his predecessors focuses on its relationship to the Demiurge and the metaphysical result of the Demiurge's contemplation of the Paradigm (the Intelligible Living Being (αὐτοζῷον) which contains all things).

The first issue addressed by Syrianus is the Paradigm's location with respect to the Demiurge. Such a relationship is important as it dictates the relationship between *nous* and the object of its contemplation. Before giving the long citation from Syrianus, Proclus summarises the opinions of Iamblichus, Porphyry, and Theodore of Asine, without dissecting or disputing their arguments. Proclus begins by switching the usual chronological order of Porphyry-Iamblichus and begins with Iamblichus (321.27–30), who says that the Paradigm is separated from everything, so that the One-Being is placed beyond the Paradigm. In this way, Essential Being is superior to the Paradigm, but still co-ordinate with it. He defines the Paradigm of the universe as "being *qua* being" that is apprehended by intellection. While Proclus does not state where Iamblichus critiques Porphyry's opinion, Iamblichus' opinion is underscored by his doctrine being placed first. Porphyry (322.1–7) is reported to have identified the Demiurge with the unparticipated Soul and the Paradigm with the Intellect. Iamblichus was likely to have been criticising Porphyry for not making a proper distinction as to what part of the noetic world the Demiurge is contemplating. Theodore is the third of the ancients whose doctrine is reported (322.7–18). Proclus inserts Theodore into the common sequence of Porphyry—Iamblichus and then views his opinion as an oddity. Theodore, who inherited a love of triadic constructions from Amelius, divides into three each term of the demiurgic triad and distinguishes in each a first monad, a middle and a final term. The last term is the Essential Living Being (*autozoōn*), which connects immediately with the other terms. The first principle is the Demiurge, who creates according to an inferior Paradigm (322.15). He likely bases this on Amelius' triad of demiurges (*In Tim.* I. 306.1 ff.; *In Tim.* III. 103.18 ff.), where the first demiurge is true being, ὁ ὤν, the second is the one

who possesses the Intelligible within him, ὁ ἔχων, and the third possesses the contents of the second intellect and sees the first element, ὁ ὁρῶν.[2]

The opinions of Iamblichus, Porphyry, and Theodore all share an awareness of the relationship between *nous* and its object of intellection as it was first formally expressed in *Enn*. III.9.1, Plotinus' commentary on *Tim*. 39 E. In his article "Plotinus, *Enn*. 3.9.1, and Later Views on the Intelligible World", Dillon argues that ὁ ἔχων possesses the content of τὸ ζῷον, which is not *nous*, but the *noêton*. Such an arrangement would have *nous* contemplating the *noêta* outside of itself. Once these *noêta* are outside of *nous*, however, they are not real being, but *eidôla*, an impossible scenario.[3] In *Enn*. III.9.1 Plotinus, after raising this aporia, solves it as follows:

> "Now, even if the two are different from each other, they are not separate from each other except in so far as they are different. Further, there is nothing in the statement against both being one, but distinguished by thought, though only in the sense that one is intelligible object, the other intelligent subject; for Plato does not say that what it sees is in something absolutely different, but in it, in that it has the intelligible object in itself."[4]

The ideas exist in *nous*, so that intellect and object of intellection are at once coordinate, yet retain individual qualities. Hence, while Amelius' triads express such a distinction in triadic unity (*nous* as possessor and *nous* as the one seeing), Plotinus' Intellect is simultaneously identical with and separate from its object of intellection. While Syrianus does not point explicitly to this debate, his conclusion as to how the Demiurge relates to the Paradigm clearly reflects Plotinus' solution in *Enn*. III.9.1.[5]

Syrianus' opinion on the Demiurge and the Paradigm follows the traditional line of argument on the subject of Intellect (here the Demiurge) and ideas (or the Paradigm as the sum of forms). Syrianus first establishes that the Demiurge would have to come after the One, as unity must precede total multiplicity, with an intermediary of numbers between the extremes. In an argument typical of Syrianus, he favors a series of

---

[2] Derived from *Tim*. 39 E.

[3] Dillon (1969) 66.

[4] Trans. Armstrong.

[5] Plotinus develops this theory further in *Enn*. V.1, where *nous* cognises an outflow of forms. Numenius, meanwhile, postulated a higher *nous*. The divine for Numenius was *nous* at rest.

gradations rather than an infinite multiplicity. Next, he addresses the question as to where the Paradigm should be placed with respect to the Demiurge:

1. *The Paradigm is after the Demiurge* (the opinion of Longinus): but then the Demiurge would be contemplating something inferior to it, which is not lawful for divine beings.

2. *The Paradigm is prior to the Demiurge* (the opinion of Porphyry): but if the Paradigm is prior to the Demiurge, it must be seen by the Intellect as something external. For if our soul can contemplate the Paradigm, then so must the universal Intellect. However, if the Intellect does contemplate the Paradigm as something higher than it, the Paradigm as an exterior object would hence be, as it were, an object of sense perception, rather than intellection. This was Plotinus' concern regarding *nous* contemplating the ideas as they exist in the prior living creature. Once the *eidê* are not *nous*, but an object of intellection, they are no longer cognised immediately, but as images:

> τὸ τοίνυν ζῷον αὐτο οὐ νοῦς, ἀλλὰ νοητὸν αὐτο φήσομεν καὶ τὸν ἔξω φήσομεν αὐτοῦ ἃ ὁρᾷ ἔχειν. Εἴδωλα ἄρα καὶ οὐ τἀληθῆ ἔχει, εἰ ἐκεῖ τἀληθῆ. (III. 9.1, 7–9.)

Syrianus draws a similar conclusion:

> Εἰ δε ὁρᾷ τὸ νοητὸν ὁ δημιουργός, πότερον εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐστραμμένος ὁρᾷ, ἢ ἔξω μόνον ἑαυτοῦ; ἀλλ' ἐι μέν ἔξω μόνον ἑαυτοῦ, εἰδωλα ὁρᾷ τοῦ ὄντος καὶ ἕξει αἰσθησιν ἀντὶ νοήσεως. (I. 323.16–19.)

3. *The Paradigm is in the Demiurge* (the view of Plotinus): Plotinus comes to the conclusion in *Enn*. III.9.1 that Intellect and the ideas are different as distinguished by thought: one is intelligible object, the other intelligent subject. Otherwise, the two coincide, and the forms exist within the Intellect:

> Ἢ, κ' ἄν ἕτερον ἑκάτερον, οὐ χωρὶς ἀλλήλων, ἀλλ' ἢ μόνον τῷ ἕτερα. Ἑπειτα οὐδέν κωλύει ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ λεγυμένῳ ἓν εἶναι ἄμφω, διαιρούμενα δε τῇ νόήσει, εἴπερ μόνον ὡς ὂν τὸ μεν νοητόν, τὸ δε νοοῦν· ὃ γὰρ καθορᾷ οὔ φησιν ἐν ἑτέρῳ πάντως, ἀλλ' ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ νοητὸν ἔχειν. (3.9.1, 11–15.)

Syrianus likewise says that the Paradigm and Demiurge are the same in some ways, different in others, and cites *Tim*. 39 E and 30 C as evidence. Syrianus says that the sameness is due to how the Demiurge contemplates

the Paradigm—by reflecting upon himself (εἰ δε εἰς ἑαυτόν, ἔστι καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ νοούμενον, 323.19–20). He adds, citing *Tim*. 29 E, that this sameness is due to divine goodness; an identity exists between Demiurge and Paradigm because the divine wanted everything to be as like him as possible (324.4–6). Thus, if the Demiurge had the forms in him primally he would be *noêtos*, an impossibility—the Paradigm cannot be in the Demiurge because the Demiurge contains the forms of heavenly bodies. The Paradigm thus must be *noêtos* above the Demiurge because he contemplates it as a prior model. The Paradigm is in some way superior to the Demiurge, which Syrianus explains using the Platonic theory of sight: there must be an intermediary between the thing seen and the organ of vision. Physical sight can only see images of reality, while *nous* cognises reality directly.[6] The Demiurge knows the Paradigm through intellection.[7]

The Paradigm, thus, exists at the same time noerically in the Demiurge because the Demiurge is an intellective entity, and noetically above him. Syrianus elaborates this simultaneous sameness and difference of the demiurgic Paradigm—because the Paradigm exists at once as object of thought and as thinker itself through an act of reflective contemplation, Syrianus says: "πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὸ παράδειγμά ἐστι καὶ ἐν αὐτῳ, νοητῶς μεν πρὸ αὐτο, νοερῶς δε ἐν αὐτῷ" (323.20–22). Syrianus explains that the forms are prior to the Demiurge noetically as the four monads of forms (324.11–12). This refers to *Tim*. 39 E 10–40 A 2, in which the Demiurge planned to make in this universe the "four kinds": gods, birds, fish, and land animals, representing the four elements, fire, air, water, and earth—a passage Syrianus alludes to in 323.6 ff. The sum total of these forms, however, exists in the Demiurge noerically as an order of monads (324.12). In this way, the Demiurge differs from the αὐτοζῷον, which contains the multitude of forms.[8] These inherent monads allow the forms themselves to be real, rather than *eidē*, and they allow the Demiurge to comprehend the forms as being inherent within him. Moreover, the statement that "one of the monads with him is the sum-total of the forms", implies that there are other monads within him. It seems entirely possible that the Demiurge has (the) active or creative principles in him that are not the forms.

[6] Plotinus, *Enn*. V.3.
[7] See Proclus, *PT* V, 5, pp. 22–30 and Syrianus, *In Met*. p. 109, pp. 33–110.7.
[8] Opsomer (2000) 364.

Both Plotinus and Amelius distinguish three elements in intellection: the living creature itself, the intellect, and the planning principle (all of which are διαιρούμενα τῇ νοήσει).[9] Syrianus places less emphasis on the planning principle, collapsing that quality into the Demiurge as Intellect, hence increasing its superiority.

In the last section, Syrianus launches into an Orphic interpretation of the Demiurge's relationship to the Paradigm. Syrianus describes how Protogonos is established as the limit of the intelligibles through Night to establish the intelligible on the level of intellectives. In his *Commentary on the Phaedrus*, Hermias recalls that Syrianus calls the "supercelestial place" Night in Orphic terms.[10] The swallowing of Phanes, identified as the αὐτοζῷον, by Zeus (identified with the Demiurge) establishes the present order of things.[11]

[9] Plotinus, *Enn*. III.9.1–14.

[10] 148.5–150.15; *PT* IV,16, 48.15–22; *PT* IV, 8, 19–22; *In Tim*. III, 88.18–21; 90.6; Hermias, *In Phaedr*. 154.15–21.

[11] Brisson (1985) 78 and (2009).

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 374.2–375.5

Βουληθεὶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν [*Tim.* 30 A].

ἡ μὲν οὖν ἀπορία τοιαύτη. λεκτέον δὲ αὐτῶν τῶν τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἐφαπτομένοις κατὰ τὸν ἡμέτερον διδάσκαλον, ὅτι δὴ τρόπος ἕτερος τῆς τε θεοῦ πρὸς τὰ πράγματα σχέσεως καὶ τῆς ἡμῶν αὐτῶν καὶ αὖ τῶν πραγμάτων πρός τε τὸ ἔνθεον καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς· ἄλλον γὰρ ἔχει λόγον τά τε ὅλα πρὸς τὰ μέρη καὶ τὰ μέρη πρὸς ἄλληλα. θεῷ μὲν[a] οὖν οὐδέν ἐστι κακόν, οὐδὲ τῶν λεγομένων κακῶν· χρῆται γὰρ καὶ τούτοις εὖ· τοῖς δὲ αὖ μερικοῖς ἔστι τι κακόν, ἃ καὶ πάσχειν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πέφυκε. καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῷ μὲν μέρει κακόν, τῷ δὲ παντὶ καὶ τοῖς ὅλοις οὐ κακόν, ἀλλ' ἀγαθόν· ᾗ γὰρ ὄν ἐστι καὶ ᾗ τάξεως μετέχει τινός, ἀγαθόν ἐστι· τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ λεγόμενον κακὸν εἰ μὲν ἔρημον ἀγαθοῦ παντὸς ὑπολάβοις, ἐπέκεινα ποιεῖς αὐτὸ καὶ τοῦ μηδαμῶς ὄντος· ὡς γὰρ τὸ αὐτοαγαθὸν πρὸ τοῦ ὄντος, οὕτω τὸ αὐτοκακὸν μετὰ τὴν οὐδένειαν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος· τὸ γὰρ πλεῖστον ἀφεστὸς τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τὸ κακόν ἐστι καὶ οὐ τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν. εἰ οὖν τὸ μηδαμῶς ὂν μᾶλλόν ἐστιν ἢ τὸ αὐτοκακόν, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο τῶν ἀδυνάτων εἶναι, πολλῷ ἄρα τοῦτο μειζόνως ἀδύνατον. εἰ δὲ μὴ πάντη κακόν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀγαθῷ συμπεπλεγμένον, δώσεις τε αὐτῷ χώραν ἐν τοῖς οὖσι καὶ τοῖς ὅλοις αὐτὸ ποιήσεις ἀγαθόν. πῶς γάρ, εἴπερ ὄν ἐστι; τὸ γὰρ ὂν μετέχει τοῦ ὄντος· τὸ τοῦ ὄντος μετέχον καὶ ἑνὸς μετέχει· τὸ ἑνὸς μετέχον ἀγαθοῦ μετέχει· τὸ ἄρα κακόν, εἴπερ ἐστίν, ἀγαθοῦ μετέχει· διόπερ οὐκ ἀκράτως ἐστὶ κακὸν οὐδὲ πάντη πλημμελὲς οὐδὲ ἀόριστον. τίς οὖν αὐτὸ ποιεῖ τοιοῦτον; τίς δὲ μέτρον αὐτῷ παρέχεται καὶ τάξιν καὶ ὅρον; δῆλον, ὡς ὁ δημιουργός, ὁ πάντα ἑαυτῷ παραπλήσια ἀπεργαζόμενος· οὗτος γὰρ καὶ τὰ ὅλα καὶ τὰ μέρη πληροῖ τῶν ἀγαθῶν. εἰ δὴ πάντα ἀγαθύνει καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ κακὸν τῷ

[a] **θεῶμεν** C

For God desired that, so far as possible, all things should be good and nothing evil

This, then, is the difficulty. We may address it by fastening on to these actual words of Plato, in accord with our Master, and saying that the way in which God is in relation with things is not the same as our way, and again things do not relate in the same way towards the divine and towards us. For the relation of the whole towards the parts is different from the parts towards each other. For God, there is no evil, not even of the things that are said to be evil; for as to these things, God puts them to a good use. For the particular beings, which are of such a nature as to suffer from it, there is such a thing, as the same thing may be evil for a part, but for the whole and in wholes, it is not evil, but good. For in so far as it is a being and participates in a certain order, it is good. For this thing said to be evil, if you assume it is void of all good, you conceive it as beyond even absolute not-being. For even as the Good in itself is prior to Being, so evil in itself is posterior to the nothingness of non-being. For that which is furthest removed from the good is evil and not absolute non-being. Therefore if absolute non-being has more existence than Evil in itself, but that is an impossibility, then far more is this impossible. But if it is not evil, but is in conjunction with the good, you will grant a place to this among beings, and you will make it good on the holistic level. How might it [not be good], if it is being? For being participates in absolute Being. And that which participates in Being also participates in the One. But that which participates in the One participates in the Good; so then, Evil, if it exists, participates in the Good. That is why there is no Evil pure and simple, nor anything wholly disordered, nor indetermined. Who would make such a thing? Who would give measure to it and order and limit? It is clear, that it would be the Demiurge, who makes all

ἀγαθῷ χρώννυσιν, οὐδέν ἐστι φλαῦρον κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τήν τε τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν τῶν δεχομένων· διττὴ γὰρ ἡ δύναμις, ἣ μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ[a] καὶ τὴν πολυάρατον κακίαν ἀγαθύνουσα, ἣ δὲ τῶν δεχομένων ⟨τῶν⟩ μέτρῳ τῆς ἑαυτῶν τάξεως τῆς ἀγαθότητος τοῦ δημιουργοῦ μεταλαβόντων. τῷ ἄρα δημιουργῷ βουλομένῳ μηδὲν εἶναι κακὸν οὐδέν ἐστι κακόν.

[a] **καὶ τὴν–τοῦ θεοῦ** om C

Commentary

Syrianus argues that evil is necessary in the universe and not at all incompatible with the notion of Providence. The ideas in this passage reappear in a much more extensive treatment in Proclus' *de Malorum Subsistentia*.[2] Prior to reporting Syrianus' opinion, Proclus states the aporia: if God is good, how could he have wished evil to exist? If he did not wish it, how does it exist? (373.28–373.30). Syrianus makes three points regarding evil: 1) that which we often consider evil in our partial universe is good with respect to the whole (374.7–12); 2) essential evil cannot exist, as all being participates in the good (374.12–374.25); 3) evil can exist in a limited sort of sense, in so far as degrees of nothingness get into the good (374.26–375.5). Syrianus approaches the problem by first arguing that evil exists with respect to particular beings. Syrianus says that just as God relates to us in a different way from how we relate to each other, so do the things that appear evil to us appear good to God. Moreover, the things that do appear evil to us on the level of partial beings

[2] See the recent edition, Proclus, *On the Existence of Evils*, trans: Opsomer-Steel (2003) and the French edition, Isaac (1982). Steel gives a thorough treatment of Proclus' argument in (1999), which summarises the argument. Proclus also discusses evil *In Remp.* I, 37.2–39.1; I, 96.1–100.2; II, 89.6–91.18; *In Parm.* 829.23–831.24; *PT* I, 18, p. 83.12–88.10.

things like himself.[1] For it is he who fills both wholes and parts with good. But if he makes all things good and tinges Evil itself with the Good, there exists no badness according to the power either of God or of the receptacles. For power has a double sense, on the one hand that of God which makes good even the much—detested evil, and on the other hand, there is the power of those receiving who participate in the Good of the Demiurge according to their rank. So, in accord with the will of the Demiurge that there should be no evil, there is no evil.

[1] *Tim*. 29 E 1–3.

---

are actually good on the level of the whole (καὶ τὸ τῷ μεν μέρει κακόν, τῷ δε παντὶ και τοῖς ὅλοις οὐ κακόν, ἀλλ' ἀγαθόν).[3] Syrianus argues that the problem is with the limited human perspective, rather than divine goodness. This idea appears both in Proclus' *De Malorum Subsistentia* 58.35–36, which addresses the question of providence: "*quod ex anima et idem malum quidem erit singularibus, totis autem bonum*", and 61.18 ff., where he says that Providence and evil have their place among beings—the gods produce evil *qua* good.[4] The clearest expression of Syrianus' view is stated by Proclus in 10.1–9 of *On the Existence of Evils*:

> "Therefore, Plato in the *Timaeus* is right in saying that in accordance with the will of the demiurge, 'all things are good and nothing is bad.' In his discussion with the geometer [sc. *Theat*. 176A], however, he contends that 'evil things cannot possibly cease to exist' and that 'by necessity' they have come to exist among beings. For all things are made good by the will of the Father, and with respect to his productive activity, none of the things

[3] Plutarch, *On Stoic Contradictions*, 34–35.

[4] Proclus, *On the Existence of Evils*, 61.17–25: "Now, if we are right in stating this, all things will be from Providence and evil has its place among beings. Therefore the gods also produce evil, but *qua* good. The gods know evil, since they possess a unitary knowledge of evils, a unitary knowledge of plurality. For the knowledge of the soul differs from that of intellect, which again differs from that of the gods themselves. For the knowledge of the soul is self-moving, that of intellect is eternal, and that of the gods is ineffable and unitary, knowing and producing everything by the One itself. Souls have a limited understanding of knowledge, because they are able to cognise only a portion of the universe at any given time. Gods, however, see the entire universe and hence, see the place of evil with respect to the whole." Trans. Opsomer-Steel.

> that are or come to be are evil. However, when he distinguishes degrees in nature he does not escape the consequences that there is evil for particular things, evil which destroys the good [in them]."[5]

Syrianus connects evil and will in lines 374.31–375.5.[6]

In 374.11–26, Syrianus, after presuming evil for particular beings, opens the ontological question of evil and argues that being or existence cannot be attributed to evil. This is a rather awkwardly constructed argument, and it would seem that this second point should come before points one and three, as they do in Proclus' treatise on evil. Still, after arguing that there is no evil for God, only for particular beings, Syrianus delves into a discussion on the ontology of evil. He first argues against those who posit that evil is a deprivation, that it is a form of non-being. Syrianus says, if a thing is said to be evil and void of all Good, it must exist beyond absolute non-being. But, as the Good is prior to being, evil would then have to exist before the nothingness of non-being, making it ontologically prior (and hence, superior) to non-being—an impossibility for Syrianus. Anything that participates in being necessarily participates in absolute Being, which in turn, participates in the Good, as the Good is the highest principle (374.23–26: τὸ γὰρ ὂν μετέχει τοῦ ὄντος· τὸ τοῦ ὄντος μετέχον καὶ ἑνὸς μετέχει· τὸ ἑνὸς μετέχον ἀγαθοῦ μετέχει· τὸ ἄρα κακόν, εἴπερ ἐστίν, ἀγαθοῦ μετέχει· διόπερ οὐκ ἀκράτως ἐστὶ κακὸν οὐδε πάντη πλημμελὲς οὐδε ἀόριστον). Evil, then, can only exist beyond absolute non-being and hence essential evil cannot actually

---

[5] Trans. Opsomer-Steel.

Recte ergo Plato in Timeo quidem secundum conditivam voluntatem bona quidem omnia, pravum autem nihil esse ait; in sermonibus autem ad geometram neque utique perdi mala, et ex necessitate in entibus facta esse pretendit. Nam omnia bonificantur voluntate patris et nihil ad illius condituram malum neque entium neque fientium; et non diffugit malum esse partialibus quorum bonum perimit, naturam per gradus distinguens.

[6] In *Enn.* III.2.1, Plotinus explains that Providence is at the level of Intellect and takes in the universe all together as one:

"Being is the true and first universe, which does not stand apart from itself and is not weakened by division and is not incomplete even in its parts, since each part is not cut off from the whole; but the whole life of it and the whole intellect lives and thinks all together in one, and makes the part the whole and all bound in friendship with itself, since one part is not separated from another and has not become merely other, estranged from the rest; and therefore, one does not wrong another, even if they are opposites."

Evil, as it appears to beings in the partial levels of existence, has a place in the All that makes the universe good as a whole. Later, Plotinus analogises the universe to a play that needs both good and bad characters (*Enn.* III.1.17).

exist.[7] Evil cannot exist in an absolute sense, but, rather in a limited, relative sense.

Syrianus' last point is to argue that a limited sort of evil exists. Such an argument answers Plotinus' notion that evil is a privation of the Good, but still exists. In *Ennead* I.8.5, 6–10 Plotinus argues that evil is a privation of the good—and what is absolutely deficient of good is, in turn, deficient of being, which participates in the good. Still, this is not to say that evil does not exist—in fact, matter exists without Being and without participation in the Good. Syrianus and Proclus argue that no absolute evil exists, for the Demiurge made everything good (374.28–29: ὁ δημιουργός ὁ πάντα ἑαυτῷ παραπλήσια ἀπεργαζόμενος).[8] Syrianus adopts the Iamblichean idea of evil as a *parhypostasis*[9]—something which exists together with another entity, a kind of parasite. Because there can be no absolute deficiency of the Good, Syrianus says that evil exists when it is mixed with matter. As Proclus puts it, Evil is limited to the particular:

> "Thus, all things are good to the father of the All, and there is evil in those things that are not capable of remaining established in complete accordance with the Good; for this reason evil is 'necessary' as we have said earlier. In what sense evil exists and in what sense it does not is clear from our argument. For both those who assert that all things are good, and those who deny this, are right in one respect and wrong in another. Indeed, it is true that all beings are, but non-being, too, is interwoven with being. Therefore all things are good, since there is no evil that is unadorned and unmixed. And also evil exists, namely for the things for which indeed there is evil: it exists for the things that do not have a nature that is disposed to remain in the good in an unmixed way."[10]
>
> *On the Existence of Evils* 1.11–21.

[7] This line of argument occurs in Proclus, *On the Existence of Evils*, 3, 1–3: "Why should we say more? For if the One and what we call the nature of the good is beyond being, then evil is beyond non-being itself—I mean absolute non-being, for the Good is better than absolute Being", trans.: Opsomer-Steel, and *PT* I, 18, p. 86, 20–21.

[8] Matter is generated by God (*Philebus* 23 C) and is not evil. Proclus, *On the Existence of Evil*, 35.

[9] Simplicius, *In Cat*. 418, 15.

[10] Trans. Opsomer-Steel.

Omnia igitur bona omnium patre, et est malum in non omnino secundum bonum stare potentibus; propter quod autem et hoc necessarium esse diximus prius. Qualiter quidem igitur est et qualiter non est malum, ex hiis palam. Omnes enim dicunt sic quidem recte, sic autem non recte, quique omnia bona dicunt et qui non. Et enim, quod omnia entia sunt, verum; sed et non ens est enti complexum. Omnia igitur bona per nullum scire malum inoratum et impermixtum; et malum est, quibus et est malum: est autem, quorum natura in bono manere impermixtim non est nata.

While the Demiurge makes all things good, degrees of unlimitedness can enter the good when the beings do not use their own power to participate in the good (375.3–4: ἢ δὲ τῶν δεχομένων τῶν μέτρῳ τῆς ἑαυτῶν τάξεως τῆς ἀγαθότητος τοῦ δημιουργοῦ μεταλαβόντων). Here, evil is the result of the free will of beings who choose to reject the good.[11]

[11] Also the view of Origen on evil. Proclus repeats this portion of Syrianus' doctrine on evil in *On the Existence of Evil*, pp. 33 and 58. This concept of providence and free will differs from Plotinus, who seems to wrestle with how blame can fall on the individual in a divinely-ordered universe. On Plotinian free will, see *Enn*. III.3. Plotinus differentiates between the free will experienced only by the higher part of the soul and the fate common to the lower part.

Proclus, *In Tim.* I. 441.15–443.8[1]

Ἕνα, εἴπερ κατὰ τὸ παράδειγμα δεδημιουργημένος ἔσται [*Tim.* 31 A].

ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος καὶ ἄλλως τὴν ἀπορίαν ταύτην διέλυε πολλαχῶς. ἔλεγε δ' οὖν, ὅτι πᾶσα μὲν ἡ νοητὴ οὐσία μονοειδής ἐστι καὶ αἰώνιος, τῶν δ' ἐγκοσμίων πραγμάτων τὰ μὲν μᾶλλον ὁμοιοῦσθαι δύναται πρὸς τὰς ἑαυτῶν οὐσίας, τὰ δὲ ἧττον· ὅσα μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἀυλότερα καὶ καθαρώτερα, μᾶλλον, ὅσα δὲ ἐνυλότερα καὶ παχύτερα, ἧττον. ὄντων οὖν ἁπάντων τῶν παραδειγμάτων ἐν οὐσίαις μοναδικαῖς τε καὶ ἀιδίοις τὰ μὲν κρείττω τῶν ἐν τῷ παντὶ μάλιστα μεμιμημένα τὰς ἑαυτῶν αἰτίας κατὰ πάντα τοῖς παραδείγμασιν ὁμοιότατα γέγονε, κατὰ τὸ μοναδικόν, κατὰ τὸ οὐσιῶδες, κατὰ τὸ ἀίδιον, τὰ δὲ χείρω ὕστερον εἶδος ὁμοιώσεως λαχόντα πῇ μὲν ὡμοίωται τοῖς σφῶν αὐτῶν αἰτίοις, πῇ δὲ οὔ. τριῶν οὖν ὄντων τούτων ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς εἴδεσι, τοῦ μοναδικοῦ, τοῦ οὐσιώδους, τοῦ διαιωνίου, πότερον τὸ μὲν μοναδικὸν αὐτῶν μιμήσεται καὶ τὸ ἀίδιον, τὸ δὲ οὐσιῶδες οὐδαμῶς; ἀλλ' ἄτοπον· δέδεικται γάρ, ὅτι οὐσίας εἶναι χρὴ τὰ ἀπ' αὐτῶν κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ εἶναι ποιούντων.

ἀλλὰ κατὰ μὲν τὸ μοναδικὸν καὶ τὸ οὐσιῶδες ἔσται μιμήματα ἐκείνων, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἀίδιον οὔ; ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτο ἀδύνατον. ἀπολείπεται γὰρ ἕκαστον μοναδικὸν μὲν ὄν, μὴ ἀίδιον δέ· διότι μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἀίδιον, εἰς τὸ μὴ ὂν οἰχήσεται, διότι δὲ μοναδικόν, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξ ὅτου γενήσεται. καὶ ὅλως πᾶν τὸ ἐξ ἀκινήτων αἰτίων ὑποστὰν ἀμετάβλητόν ἐστι κατ' οὐσίαν, ἀκίνητα δὲ τὰ εἴδη· νοητὰ γάρ ἐστιν. ἢ τοίνυν ἅπαντα μιμεῖσθαι δυνατὸν ἢ τινά. πάντα δὲ ἀδύνατον· τὰ γὰρ πορρωτέρω τῶν ἀρχῶν ἧττον ὁμοιοῦται πρὸς αὐτάς· καὶ γὰρ τοῦ Πυθαγόρου πάσας ἐπιστήμας ἔχοντος ὃ μὲν ἐγγυτέρω πᾶσαν αὐτοῦ τὴν γνῶσιν ὑποδέχεται δευτέρως, ὃ δὲ πορρωτέρω[a] τὰς μὲν διδάσκεται τῶν ἐπιστημῶν, πρὸς δὲ τινὰς ἀσύμμετρός ἐστιν.

---

[a] **ὁ δὲ πορφύριος** M fort. recte **πορρωτέρως** M

[1] The whole discussion of which this is a part continues for a number of pages; however, at 443.8 Proclus begins a new argument with "ἔτι καὶ κατ' ἄλλον τρόπον ἐπιχειρεῖν ἡμῖν δυνατόν", indicating that he has merged his own opinion to that of Syrianus.

One it must be termed, if it is to be framed after its Pattern.

Our teacher resolved this aporia differently, and in many ways. He used to say,[2] then, that the whole of intelligent being is unitary and eternal, but among cosmic things, some can be more assimilated to their own essences, but others less so. For such things as are more immaterial and purer are more so, but the more material and the crasser are less so. Whereas all models are characterised by the unique and eternal essences, the more superior in the universe mimic more closely their causes, have become the most similar to their models in all respects, with respect to unity, substantiality, and eternity, while those which are being allocated a lower, worse type of similarity are, in one respect, assimilated to their own causes, in another respect, not. Since there are three elements in the intelligible forms, unity, substantiality, and eternity, will they imitate their unity and eternity, but in no way their substance? But that is absurd. For, indeed, it has been shown that that which issues from the forms must be substances, since they create by way of their very existence.

But will they be copies with respect to unity and substantiality, but not in respect to eternity? This also is impossible. The remaining possibility is that each is unique, but not eternal. For if it is not eternal, it will dissolve into non-being, but if it is unique, there is nothing from which it can arise. But generally, everything brought forth into being from immovable causes is unchanging according to its essence, and the forms are immovable; for they are intelligible. So, either it is possible to imitate all aspects [of forms] or only certain ones. But those farther from their first principles are less similar to them: for example, while Pythagoras possesses all the sciences, he who is closer to him receives all his knowledge in a secondary way, whereas he who is farther away learns the doctrines of some sciences, but is unequal to other ones.

[2] Ἔλεγε δ' οὖν, 441.17: use of the imperfect here, once again, possibly indicates that Syrianus said the things which follow in a lecture.

εἰ τοίνυν πάντα ἀδύνατον, λείπεται τινά. καὶ εἰ τινά, τριῶν ὄντων ἐν ἐκείνοις τῶν νοητῶν εἰδῶν χαρακτηριστικῶν, ὡς ἔσται δῆλον, τριῶν δ' οὖν ὄντων, ὡς εἴπομεν, ἢ τὰ ἄκρα μεμιμημένα τοῦ μέσου γέγονεν ἄμοιρα, ἢ τὰ δύο τὰ πρῶτα δεξάμενα τοῦ τρίτου φαίνοιτ' ἂν ἀπολελειμμένα, ἢ τοῦ πρώτου μὴ τυχόντα τῶν μετ' αὐτὸ μετείληχεν. ἀλλὰ μὴν δέδεικται μηδέτερον τῶν πρώτων ἀληθὲς ὄν· ἀνάγκη ἄρα τὸ μὲν μοναδικὸν αὐτὰ μὴ ἀποτυπώσασθαι τῶν εἰδῶν, τὸ δὲ οὐσιῶδες μόνον καὶ τὸ αἰώνιον, διὸ πάντα μὲν τὰ ἐγκόσμια εἴδη οὐσίαι καὶ ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως ἑστηκότα, οὐ πάντα δὲ μοναδικά· οὐ γὰρ πάντα πρὸς πάσας ἔχει τὰς τῶν παραδειγμάτων δυνάμεις συμμέτρως.

ὅτι δὲ πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν εἶδος καὶ ὅλως παραδειγματικὸν αἴτιον πρώτως ὂν μοναδικόν ἐστι καὶ ἀίδιον καὶ οὐσιῶδες, δῆλον· εἴτε γὰρ μὴ οὐσία εἴη, συμβεβηκὸς ἔσται, πᾶν δὲ συμβεβηκὸς περὶ τὴν ὕλην ὑφίσταται καὶ τὰ ἐν ὕλῃ ὄντα, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν τοῖς χωριστοῖς αἰτίοις. εἴτε μὴ ἀίδιον, οὐδ' ἂν ἡ εἰκὼν αὐτοῦ ἀίδιος εἴη· δεῖ δέ, εἴπερ ἐκ πάντων ἀεὶ τῶν εἰδῶν ὁ κόσμος. ἀρχῆς δὲ ἀπολομένης οὐδεμία μηχανὴ σῴζεσθαι τὸ ἀπ' αὐτῆς. εἴτε μὴ μοναδικόν, οὐκέτ' ἂν εἴη πρώτως παράδειγμα· δύο γὰρ εἶναί τι πρώτως ἀδύνατον, ὥς φησι καὶ ὁ ἐν Πολιτείᾳ [X 597 C] Σωκράτης. αὐτοῖς γὰρ τούτοις ἡ ταυτότης πόθεν ἢ ἀφ' ἑνός τινος κοινοῦ εἴδους; ταῦτα ἄρα τὰ τρία πᾶσιν ὑπάρχει τοῖς πρώτοις παραδείγμασι, καὶ ἔοικε τὸ μὲν μοναδικὸν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ πέρατος ὑπάρχειν, τὸ δὲ ἀίδιον ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπειρίας, τὸ δὲ οὐσιῶδες ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης οὐσίας.

Then, if it is impossible to imitate everything, it remains that one imitates some. And if some, then, there being three characteristics of intelligible forms, as it will appear—there being three, as we said—either they imitate extremes, without having a share in the mean, or taking on the first two, they might appear to be without a third, or not acquiring the first, they participate in those after it. But it has been demonstrated that neither of the first two are true; for it would be necessary, then, that they do not reproduce the unity of forms, but only the substance and the eternity, and for this reason, all encosmic forms are substances, and eternally established, but they are not all monadic, for not all have suitability to all the powers of the paradigms.

So then, it is clear that every intelligible form and generally the paradigmatic cause firstly is a monadic being and eternal and substantial. For if it were not a substance, it will be an accident. But the accidental is always attached to matter and the things in matter, but not in the transcendent (i.e. separated) causes. And again, if it were not eternal, the copy of it would not be eternal. But it must be, if the universe is always composed of all the forms. But if the cause is being destroyed, there is no means by which that coming from it can be preserved. Again, if it is not unique, it would not be primally a paradigm. For it is impossible, as Socrates says in the *Republic* [597 C], for there to be two primal entities; for where would the similarity between these two come from other than some common single source? So then, these three characters belong to all the primal paradigms, and it is reasonable to assume that the monad springs from the Limit, the Eternal from Unlimitedness, and the Substantial from the Primal Essence.

Commentary

This is a rather scholastic look at the question of why some forms only produce one substantiation (e.g., the form of the sun produces only one sun) but others a multiplicity (the form of rabbit produces many rabbits)[3] (Proclus' aporia: 441.10–15). Syrianus tediously derives a solution, whereby not all products imitate their causes to the same degree.[4]

The basis of this argument rests on the three characteristics of forms: unity, substantiality, and eternity (441.25). The first two of these characteristics must be passed on to their products, while the third term, referring to a kind of monadicity, is only passed from some forms to some products (442.19–25). Only beings that are suitable to uniqueness partake of the monadic quality. Syrianus explains that beings are more or less similar to their forms, depending on their level of materiality (441.16–21). Those less material contain greater similarity to their forms, while those more material contain fewer similarities. This concept relates to the theory that when the power of the forms (henads) processes outward, it decreases in power the farther it proceeds from its source.

Copies mimic their forms depending on which of the characteristics are granted to them, which is in turn according to their rank. Substantiality must be bestowed on their products: forms can only create substantial things because they create by their own substance (441.30–442.1). Eternity, moreover, must also be granted: if it were not, certain products—say, rabbits—would disappear (442.4). Syrianus argues that since we see all the products remain, they must partake of eternity: i.e., while individual rabbits die, the form of "rabbit" in matter is eternal—clearly, Syrianus did not believe in the process of extinction or Darwinism! A monadic quality, however, is not necessarily granted, as it requires that nothing further from it can arise (442.19–25). This seems an odd conjecture, as a generated thing with a monadic quality surely exists; it just exists alone as unique. This section also explains that there must be three forms, because there cannot be two extremes without a median.

In the last section (442.25–443.8), Syrianus steps backwards and explains why a form must be a monadic being, eternal, and substantial. If a form were not substantial, it would be an accident and hence linked

[3] See Proclus' aporia, 441.10–15.

[4] Syrianus gives a lengthy description of which things on earth are not associated with forms. See *In Metaph.* 107.5 ff.; Proclus, *In Parm.* 811.32, where Proclus discusses categories of forms; cf. Gersh (1978) pp. 88–89.

to matter, rather than existing as a transcendent cause (442.27–29). If it were not eternal, its copies would likewise not be eternal, and breeds of sub-lunar beings would continually cease existence (442.29–31). Finally, if it were not a unique monad, it could not be a paradigmatic cause. Citing *Republic* 597 C, Syrianus argues that there cannot be two different forms for the same copy: there would have to be a third, higher transcendent cause that acts as the cause of the similar two (443.2–4).

Lines 443.4–8 link the three characteristics of forms to the triad that exists in the realm of the One: *peras, apeiria*, and *primal being* (which must, in the context, refer to the "unified", as τὸ ἕν ὄν). Here, monadicity is associated with *peras*, eternity with *apeiria*, and substantiality with *prôte ousia*. This is an in accordance with Iamblichus' understanding of three entities (where *peras* and *apeiria* precede the One Existent, which is their product, the μικτόν or ἡνωμένον).[5] Proclus, in his turn, attaches the three to the principle of the Primal One, One-Being, and Eternity, as he explains it in *In Parm*. 831.27–832.1:

> "The forms are of universal substances and of their perfections: for these are the most characteristic attributes of Forms: goodness, essentiality, eternity—the first being derived from the primary cause, the second from the One Being, and the third from Eternity. They descend into the first order of Forms, a rank, however, which is second to Eternity and third from the One Being but dependent, like all beings, on the cause of all good."[6]

Proclus descends further down the ranks of the One—placing the last form of the eternal into the noetic rank, just as he corresponds the characteristics of forms with their sources. Thus, the forms are not only in the realm of the One, but also in the Intelligible realm. This looks back to Iamblichus' principle of the One Existent which was also known as the *aeon*: this was both the ruling monad of the intelligible realm and the last rank of the henadic realm.[7] Proclus shows a return to Iamblichus' more systematic ordering of the forms and a desire to connect them to the noetic realm.

[5] See Dillon (1973) 32.
[6] Trans: Dillon (1987).
[7] Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 63 and 64 Dillon.

Proclus, *In Tim.* II. 35.15–28

Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐπίπεδον μέν, βάθος δὲ μηδὲν ἔχον ἔδει γίγνεσθαι τὸ τοῦ παντὸς σῶμα, μία μεσότης ἂν ἐξήρκει τά τε μεθ' ἑαυτῆς ξυνδεῖν καὶ αὐτήν· νῦν δέ—στερεοειδῆ γὰρ αὐτὸν προσῆκεν εἶναι, τὰ δὲ στερεὰ μία μὲν οὐδέποτε, δύο δε ἀεὶ μεσότητες προσαρμόττουσι [*Tim.* 32 AB].

εἰ μὴ ἄρα καὶ ἐκεῖνο ἀληθές, ὅπερ ἔλεγεν ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών· ἔλεγε δέ, ὅτι δέοι λαμβάνειν τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν ταῖς μεσότησι λόγον, ὅς ἐστιν ἐν ταῖς πλευραῖς τῶν ἄκρων. οἷον εἰ ὁ μὲν εἷη κύβος ὀκτώ, ὁ δὲ ἑπτὰ καὶ εἴκοσι, τὰς μεσότητας αὐτῶν εὑρίσκομεν, εἰ λάβοιμεν τὰς πλευρὰς αὐτῶν, τὸν δύο καὶ τρία, καὶ ποιήσαιμεν αὐτοὺς ἐπ' ἀλλήλους καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἑκάτερον· ἔσονται γὰρ οἱ μέσοι διὰ τοῦ ἡμιολίου λόγου[a] συνάπτοντες τοὺς ἄκρους, ὅσπερ ἦν καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐξ ἀρχῆς[b] πλευραῖς τῶν κύβων. τοῦ τοίνυν αὐτοῦ λόγου ὄντος ἔν τε ταῖς πλευραῖς τῶν κύβων καὶ ἐν τοῖς μέσοις δύο ἐξ ἀνάγκης οἱ μέσοι, φαίη ἂν ὁ Πλάτων. καὶ τοῦτο συμφωνότερον πρὸς τὴν προκειμένην φυσιολογίαν· καὶ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεσι τῶν στοιχείων καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἁπλοῖς εἴδεσι πρὸ τῶν συνθέτων ἐντίθησιν ὁ δημιουργὸς τὴν κοινωνίαν.

[a] **τὸν ἡμιολίου λόγον** P [b] **ἀρχαῖς** P

Now if the body of the All had had to come into existence as a plane surface, having no depth, one middle term would have sufficed to bind together both itself and its fellow-terms; but now it is otherwise; for it behoved it to be solid of shape, and what brings solids into unison is never one middle term alone but always two.

Unless this also might be true, what our teacher said. He said that it is right to assume that the same ratio obtains in the middle terms as in the sides of the extremes. For example, if one cube might be 8, but another 27, we find their middle term if we were to take their sides, 2 and 3, and multiply them to each other and each both according to the product. For the middle terms will be joining the extremes in the ratio of 1½ to 1, which was the ratio also of the original sides of the cubes. If then the ratio is the same, both in the sides of the cubes and in the means, the means will be by necessity two, according to Plato. And this is more in accord with the previously-stated account of nature. For the Demiurge established a common bond between the powers of the elements and the simple forms before he established composite things.

Commentary

This mathematical description of the cosmos shows the composition of the universe into its four elements (fire, air, water, and earth), each of which is related to and dependent on the others. The notion of suitable means, as derived mathematically by Syrianus here, shows how elements are necessarily proportional in the universe, so that all together, they form the cosmos as one.[1] This is a nice example of Syrianus explaining Platonic arithmetic and geometry in terms of ontology, which is alluded to with the term "natural causes" (φυσιολογία) in 35.26. In *In Met.* 85.38–86.2, Syrianus says:

> "The five figures which are discussed in the *Timaeus* and which are employed in the formation of the cosmic elements are, on the one hand, interpreted in mathematical terms, but on the other hand, hint at active and creative powers in nature."[2]

This fragment, however, ends at the point where the connections are made between geometry and hierarchical metaphysics.

While the commentary tradition on this passage from the *Timaeus* is indeed thorough and plentiful, the Platonists tend, for the most part, to stay close to the text when explicating *Tim.* 32 A. In *Tim.* 31 B, Plato says that the Demiurge first made the universe from fire—to make it visible—and earth—to make it tangible, but needed a third to connect the two. This bond must be in perfect proportion to the two it is connecting. This concept is Empedoclean, who listed fire and earth as a requirement for its visibility and resistance to touch, and then demanded a third to bond the two extremes.[3] In 32 A, Plato says that whenever there are three numbers, the middle one is first proportioned to the last, so that the last is in proportion to the middle, the middle to the first, and hence, the first is proportioned to the last. What follows both in the text of the *Timaeus* and Syrianus' commentary on the *Timaeus* is an exposition on proportional mean terms both for square numbers and for cubes.[4] The short version of

[1] The geometrical formation of the spheres is expressed in the souls of the world; the demiurge makes the soul in a straight line, cuts it lengthwise in two, curbs the two parts into two circles, and divides one of the circles into seven. These geometrical figures exist as forms at the level of intellect. See Steel (2007) 225–226.

[2] Trans. Siorvanes (1996) 226.

[3] Cornford (1997) 45. This is also cited by Nicomachus, *Introd. Arith.* ii, 24, p. 126 and Iamblichus, *In Nicom. Ar. Introd.* p. 100.

[4] Proclus' geometrical theology depends heavily on Philolaus whose fragments are found solely in Proclus. Philolaus dedicated angles of geometrical figures to gods, so that

the argument is that the four elements which comprise the cosmos create a "solid", or cube. This cube and the four elements have two mean terms which allow them to inter-relate proportionately. With the rule of suitable means, the cosmos partakes in a continual existence as all its similar parts grant it unity.

While Syrianus' explanation begins at the point of the three-dimensional cube, both Plato and various Platonists begin their query with the plane, or square numbers: 31 C 5: ὁπόταν γὰρ ἀριθμῶν τριῶν ἔτε ὄγκων εἴτε δυνάμεων ὧντινωνοῦν. Here, δύναμις most likely refers to square and ὄγκος to cube.[5] Drawing on theorems in Euclid's *Elements*[6] viii, 11, 12, Plato (and Syrianus) build on the statement that between two squares there can be one proportional mean, while between two cubes there are two means (Proclus also states this in 35.5).[7] For instance, using the numbers for two cubes Syrianus shows us that the middle terms can easily be found if we take their sides: 2 (m) and 3 (n). By multiplying variations of the sides: $2\times2\times3$ (m^2n) and $3\times3\times2$ (n^2m), two middle numbers are found, 12 and 18, so that the two proportional means of 8 and 27 are 12 and 18: 8, 12, 18, 27.[8] The progression for cubic numbers is thus 1½ to 1 (meaning that when one adds half of the present number to itself, one derives the next successive number).

Proclus describes an elaboration to this system, so that the cubic (or three-dimensional) structure of this world is found in ratios of the elements:[9]

---

the angle of the square is devoted to Rhea, Demeter and Hestia. See Procl. *In Eucl.* 174, 3–16. On Proclus' use of Philolaus, see Steel (2007) 219. In this article, Steel shows how Proclus connects the efficiency of the angles of the triangle with divine providence.

[5] Both Cornford (1997) 46 and Heath, *Thirteen Books of Euclid* (1926) ii, 294, offer these meanings. Liddell, Scott, and Jones, *A Greek-English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1968), give for δύναμις the definition: "product of two numbers" and list this under usages found in Plat. *Tim.* 54 B; 32 A; Iamblichus. *Theol. Ar.* 11 and 33 and *In N.C.* p. 108P. ὄγκος is defined as "bulk, size, mass." The citations are mostly from Plato, referring to numbers: *Tht.* 155 A; etc., although it is also listed as appearing in Empedocles fr. 20.1.

[6] In his commentary on Euclid's *Elements*, Proclus only refers to Syrianus once. See *In Eucl.* 123, 19 on the quantity and quality of angles.

[7] In all fairness to his predecessors, Democritus, Archytas, Menaechmus, and Eratosthenes likewise note proportional numbers in cubes and derive solutions. They differ, however, on the number of means and manner of derivation.

[8] This is explained in more detail by Proclus in 31.22–29.

[9] Siorvanes discusses this passage, see (1996) 226.

fire = $a^2(a)$
earth = $b^2(b)$
air = $a^2(b)$
water = $a(b^2)$

Thus, the universe is comprised of elements fundamentally similar to one another, each being the product of the same components in different ratios. In his *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*, 97, 18 sq., Proclus uses the development from point to line to surface to volume to illustrate the progress from unity-dyad-triad-and tetrad. It is at the stage of volume, the "summit of beings", he says, in which the tetrad (symbolic of the four elements) becomes generative of the total cosmic order.[10] In this system, moreover, point engenders line, which causes surface, which engenders volume: just as every being in the universe is limited by its cause, so are the mathematical causes superior to their effects.[11] While after Syrianus' fragment Proclus goes into much greater detail as to various cubic connections, his statement directly after the lemma encapsulates both his point and Syrianus' "natural causes". He argues that every generation indicates a change and a change indicates two terms: without the four elements and their unity there would be no generation and stability.

It is only after Proclus gives Syrianus' explanation and his own account that he brings Iamblichus into the story (2.36.24 ff.).[12] According to Proclus, Iamblichus finds one mean for the simple reason-principles and forms, but two means for the material bodies, which are composed of form and matter. A dyad presides over the latter's composition.[13]

[10] Proclus, *In Eucl.* 97, 19–99 and 114, 25–115, 8. Charles-Saget discusses such aspects of Proclus' thought, (1982) 272. See also fr. II 4 Lang 28 Tarán Speusippus' *On Pythagorean Numbers* (*Theol. Ar.* (84, 10–12)) which says that 1, 2, 3, 4 correspond to point, line, triangle and pyramid. This passage discusses the Pythagorean correlation between point, line, surface, and solid with 1, 2, 3, 4. See Mueller (1987) 341.

[11] Proclus, *ET* prop. 7; 30. Charles-Saget (1982) 273.

[12] = Iamblichus, *in Tim.* fr. 48 Dillon.

[13] See Dillon (1973) 321–325.

Proclus, *In Tim.* II. 95.18–96.7

Διὸ δὴ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐν ἑαυτῷ περιαγαγὼν αὐτὸ ἐποίησε κύκλῳ κινεῖσθαι στρεφόμενον, τὰς δὲ ἕξ ἁπάσας κινήσεις ἀφεῖλεν καὶ ἁπλανὲς ἀπειργάσατο ἐκείνων. ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν περίοδον ταύτην ἅτε οὐδὲν ποδῶν δέον ἀσκελὲς καὶ ἄπουν αὐτὸ ἐγέννησεν [*Tim.* 34 A].

Τὸ μὲν παράδειγμα τῆς κυκλοφορίας ὅτι νοῦς ἐστι καὶ φρόνησις, εἴρηται πρότερον· τίς δέ ἐστιν αὕτη καὶ πῶς ἀπεικάζεται πρὸς νοῦν, ἐν τούτοις παραδίδωσιν ὁ λόγος· ἔστι γὰρ ἡ κυκλοφορία κίνησις κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ περιαγομένη, καθάπερ ἐν τούτοις τέ φησιν ὁ Τίμαιος καὶ ἐν Νόμοις [X 898 A] ὁ Ἀθηναῖος Ξένος· ὧν τὸ μὲν κατὰ ταὐτὰ ταὐτόν ἐστι τῷ καθ' ἕνα λόγον καὶ μίαν τάξιν.

τί γάρ, εἰ κινοῖτο μὲν τὸ πᾶν κυκλικῶς, μεταβάλλοι δὲ ἄλλοτε ἄλλως ἀνατέλλον ἢ δῦνον, ὥς φησιν ὁ ἐν τῷ Πολιτικῷ [269 A] μῦθος; ἵν' οὖν μὴ τοῦτο ὑπολάβωμεν, τὸ κατὰ ταὐτὰ πρόκειται τῶν ἄλλων περὶ αὐτῆς ῥημάτων. οὐκ ἄρα ὀρθῶς ὁ Πλατωνικὸς Σευῆρος—παρρησιασόμεθα γὰρ ἐντεῦθεν πρὸς αὐτόν—τὰς ἀνακυκλήσεις τὰς μυθικὰς προσέμενος καὶ γενητὸν οὕτω ποιῶν καὶ ἀγένητον τὸν κόσμον· τὸ μὲν γὰρ πᾶν κατὰ ταὐτά φησιν ὁ Πλάτων [Leg. 1. c.] καὶ ὡσαύτως κινεῖσθαι καὶ καθ' ἕνα λόγον καὶ μίαν τάξιν· ἡ δὲ ἀνακύκλησις οὕτως, ὥσπερ λέγεται, τὴν μίαν ἀναιρεῖ τάξιν τῆς κινήσεως. ἀλλ' αὕτη μὲν ὅπως διαμεμυθολόγηται πρὸς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς εἰς ἐκεῖνον ἀναγεγραμμένοις τὸν διάλογον εἴρηται τῷ Πλάτωνι κατὰ νοῦν.

Wherefore[1] He spun it round uniformly in the same spot and within itself and made it move revolving in a circle; and all the other six motions He took away and fashioned it free from their aberrations. And seeing that for this revolving motion it had no need of feet, He begat it legless and footless.

That the paradigm of circular motion is Intellect and understanding has been said earlier (94, 17). What this same motion is, and how it is likened to Intellect, is set out in the present passage. For the circular motion is motion "going around in the same way and in the same place and in itself", even as Timaeus puts it in the present passage and as the Athenian Stranger says in the *Laws* (X 898 A)—where the expressions "according to one ratio and one order" is equivalent of "in the same way."

For how would it be if the universe were to move in a circle, but were to change by at one time or another moving clockwise or anti-clockwise, as the Myth in the *Statesman* presents it [269 A]? Therefore, lest we assume this, the phrase "in the same way" stands before the rest of the description of it. Thus the Platonist Severus—indeed, let us speak freely about this—was not correct in adopting these mythical alternations of cycles and making the cosmos both generated and ungenerated; for Plato says that the universe "moves uniformly and regularly, and according to a single rational principle and order" [*Laws*, ibid]; but the revolution, nevertheless, just as was said, destroys the ordinance of motion; this so-called alternation of cycles, however, destroys the single order of motion. But that that account is couched in mythical form has been explained by our Master in his commentary on that dialogue, in accordance with the intentions of Plato.

[1] This translation is a modification of Dillon's; see (1992) 367–368.

Commentary

This passage is a commentary on Plato's six sublunary motions and a critique of the theory of alternating cycles (which implies that the world had a beginning in time).

To support his interpretation of *Tim.* 34 A, Syrianus addresses *Laws* 898 A and *Statesman* 269 A. The *Laws* passage looks to Book 10 on circular motion, which is characterised by movement in the same conditions, same speed and same angle (κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ περιαγομένη, 95.22). The *Statesman* fragment is of particular importance as it is likely evidence that Syrianus wrote a commentary on the *Statesman*: not only does Syrianus refer to the *Statesman* in 95.29, but in 96.5–7 Proclus states that there was a written monograph on the topic (τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς εἰς ἐκεῖνον ἀναγεγραμμένοις τὸν διάλογον εἴρηται τῳ Πλάτωνι κατὰ νοῦν), especially with respect to how the myth should be understood ("διαμεμυθολόγηται" 96.5). While no Platonic commentary on the *Statesman* exists that we know of, it formed part of the curriculum for study in the Platonic Academy.[2] The passage in the *Statesman* that Syrianus refers to is the myth in 269 A, "μεταβάλλοι δε ἄλλοτε ἄλλως ἀνατέλλον ἢ δῦον" (95.26), which discusses the changing, rising and setting of the universe—Kronos is said to wind the universe one way, while under the rule of Zeus, the universe winds in the opposite direction.

In 95.30 ff. Syrianus criticises Severus' position on *Statesman* 269 A. Severus answers the problem of whether the universe was created or uncreated with the Stoic concept of *apokatastasis*, the periodic destruction of the world and its circles. Proclus summarises Severus' position in *In Tim.* I. 289, 7 ff.:

> "[Severus] says the cosmos is eternal in the absolute sense, but that this present one, moving in its present direction, is created. For there are two cycles, the one on which the universe is at present turning, and the other one which is opposite to it. The cosmos, in so far as it is turning according

[2] *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, ch. 26 (*Prolégomènes à la philosophie de Platon*), ed. by Westerink and translated by Trouillard and Segonds (1990). Westerink (1962) xxxviii opines that Iamblichus considers the *Statesman* to be a discussion of the heavenly Demiurge, since he takes the *Sophist* to be about the sublunar demiurge in his commentary on *Sophist* 216 A. Dillon (1992) 366. See Iamblichus, *In Soph.* fr. 1 Dillon (= Hermann, *Plat. Dial.* VI pp. 249–250, and Greene, *Scholia Platonica*, pp. 40 = 445.6).

> to this cycle, is created and had a beginning, but in the absolute sense it is not."[3]

In this sense, Severus gives a more literal interpretation of *Statesman* 269 A. While the universe is uncreated in eternity, the circuits of the universe are created in time. Both Syrianus and Proclus interpret the cycles to be simultaneous with each other. Proclus addresses Severus' quotation in the lines that follow:

> "You [Severus] are improperly transferring the riddling account of myth onto the level of a scientific discussion. Soul that originates movement could never leave off its activity and alter its original circuit. And how, then, if both moved and mover preserve their original states, is there any place for this alternation of cycles?"[4]

Syrianus, likewise, criticises *apokatastasis* as destroying the concept of μία τάξις, or single order of motion as understood by Plato (95.31).

Syrianus bases his critique on the concept that alternating cycles would imply a change in the Demiurge—from creating to not-creating—, a critique that was taken up in the above passage by Proclus. Proclus, moreover, further allegorises cosmic cycles in the *Statesman*. The following two passages are worth examining in detail to consider Proclus' adaptation of Syrianus' *Statesman* interpretation. The position is stated in *In Tim*. I. 288, 13 ff.:

> "If the creator is one of the eternal beings, it cannot be the case that at one time he creates, and at another time he leaves hold of the rudder-handles, for he would not in that case maintain uniformity or unchangeability."[5]

Proclus does not accept that the Demiurge moves from one action to another—such a change in demiurgic activity would not be in line with the late Platonic notion of eternal creation.

With the problem of two separate activities for the Demiurge established, Proclus explains how the two ages of Kronos represent simultaneous metaphysical states. While he does not credit Syrianus, it is a most Syrianic concept. In *In Tim*. III. 309.20 ff., he explains that a cycle of Kronos governs in the intelligible realm, while a cycle of Zeus rules in the physical realm. *Platonic Theology* V. 6, 25, 3 ff. goes into this idea in more detail. Here, the cycle of Kronos is at the summit of the intelligible level of being on which the souls on the intellectual level of reality depend.

---

[3] Dillon (1992) 368.
[4] Dillon (1992) 368.
[5] Trans. Dillon (1992).

The cycle of Zeus occurs simultaneously to that of Kronos, but it takes place at the physical level. *Platonic Theology* V. 6 (25, 3 ff.) explains this relationship between the two levels:

> "There are, then, two sorts of life in the world, the one invisible and intellectual, the other physical and manifest, the former being defined by Providence, the latter proceeding irregularly according to Fate. Of these, that which is secondary and multiform and realised in Nature is dependent upon the order of Zeus, while that which is more simple and intellectual and invisible depends upon on that of Kronos. And this is clearly indicated by the Eleatic Stranger when he calls the one of the cycles "Zeusian" and the other "Kronian". In fact Zeus is also cause of the invisible life of the universe, and is the dispenser of intellect to it, and its leader to intellectual perfection, but he elevates all beings to the realm of Kronos, and it is because he is leader along with his father that he brings into existence the cosmic intellect as a whole. Indeed, if we are to tell the whole truth, each of the two cycles, I mean the visible and invisible, has a connection with both these gods, though the one is preeminently proper to Kronos, while the other pertains more to the regime of Zeus."[6]

These cycles comprise two aspects of the metaphysical universe. The realm of providence is governed by Kronos, while the realm of fate, which has immediate, but not supreme control over the natural world, is governed by Zeus. Proclus, moreover, finds evidence that the two cycles are ruled by Kronos and Zeus in *Statesman* 272 E 6–8, which he cites in *In Tim*. III. 273.19 ff. in a discussion of providence and fate. While Providence and Kronos have supreme control over the universe, actual control of the cosmos is governed by Zeus, the Demiurge, who acts as a catalyst using fate in the physical world.

It might be objected, in conclusion, that the present passage is a fragment, not of the *Timaeus* commentary, but of a *Statesman* commentary. One can only plead, in response, to that, that Syrianus may well have taken the opportunity, in commenting this passage, of alluding to his views on the *Statesman* myth, even as does Proclus.

[6] Trans. Dillon (1992) 371.

Proclus, *In Tim.* II. 105.28–106.9

Ψυχὴν δὲ εἰς τὸ μέσον αὐτοῦ θεὶς διὰ παντός τε ἔτεινε καὶ ἔτι ἔξωθεν τὸ σῶμα αὐτῇ περιεκάλυψεν [*Tim.* 34 B].

ὁ δέ γε ἡμέτερος καθηγεμὼν προσφυέστερον τοῖς τοῦ Πλάτωνος ῥήμασιν ἐποιεῖτο τὴν ἐξήγησιν· τῆς γὰρ τοῦ παντὸς ψυχῆς ἐχούσης μέν τι καὶ ὑπερκόσμιον καὶ ἐξῃρημένον τοῦ παντός, καθὸ συνῆπται πρὸς τὸν νοῦν, ὃ δὴ κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς ὅ τε Πλάτων ἐν τῷ Φαίδρῳ [248 A] καὶ ὁ Ὀρφεὺς ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς Ἴπτας[a] λόγοις προσωνόμασεν, ἐχούσης δὲ καὶ δυνάμεων ἄλλο πλῆθος ἀπὸ τῆς μονάδος ταύτης προϊὸν καὶ μεριζόμενον περὶ τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάσαις οἰκείως παρὸν ταῖς μοίραις τοῦ παντός, καὶ ἄλλως μὲν περὶ τὸ μέσον, ἄλλως δὲ περὶ τὴν γῆν, ἄλλως δὲ περὶ τὸν ἥλιον, ἄλλως δὲ περὶ ἑκάστην τῶν σφαιρῶν, ταῦτα πάντα ὁ παρὼν ἔφη λόγος ἐνδεικνύμενος, ὡς ἄλλως μὲν ψυχοῖ τὸ μέσον, ἄλλως δὲ τὸν ὅλον ὄγκον, ἄλλο δέ τι πρὸ τούτων ἀφίησιν ἐξῃρημένον τοῦ παντός.

[a] **ἵππας** ς: **ἵπτας** PQ

And in the midst thereof He set Soul, which He stretched throughout the whole of it, and therewith He enveloped also the exterior of its body

As for our Teacher, he produces an interpretation more suitable to the words of Plato. Whereas the Soul of the universe has on the one hand an aspect which is hypercosmic and transcendent over all the universe in virtue of which it is attached to Intellect, which Plato in the *Phaedrus* (248 A) and Orpheus in his *Discourse on Hipta*,[1] called the "head of the Soul," and on the other hand, a multitude of powers coming forth from this monad and dividing themselves in one way around the centres, and present in the appropriate mode to all parts of the universe, in one way around the earth, in another around the sun, and still others around each of the spheres, the present utterance indicates all these, how in one way it ensouls the middle,[2] and in another the whole bulk (of the world); while there is another aspect, prior to these, which he leaves as transcending the universe.

[1] This is a very odd reference. Hipta appears as a minor mythological figure, nurse of Dionysus after his rebirth from Zeus' thigh. She is equated by Proclus with the All-Soul. Her *noeseis* are given substance in the highest form of movement. She appears in Kern's Orphic fragment collection, although the primary references are from Proclus. See *OF* 199 Kern, Proclus *In Tim*. 34 B (II 105, 28 Diehl) (sc. Iamblichus); Ἵπτας Diehl (PQ) and vulgo; Proclus *In Tim*. 30 B (I 407, 22 Diehl) (cf. *in Tim*. 35 B) [II 198, 9 Diehl] et II 222, Herm. XXIV. XLIII; Lob. I 582; Luebbert *De Pindaro theologiae Orphicae censore Index Bonnens*. 1888/1889 p. XX; Holwerda 364; Kern *Genethliakon für Robert* 90. Hymn. XLVIII Σαβαζίου (Quandt, *De Baccho ab Alexandri aetate in Asia minore culto*. Diss. Hal. XXI 1912, 257): *Hymn*. XLIX

Nutricis Bacchi nomen genuinum restituit Ios. Keil e duobus titulis dedicatoriis in Matrem Hiptam in Maeonia repertis Eranos zur Grazer Philologenversammlung 1909, 102 (Keil et de Premerstein *Denkschr. Akad. Wien Phil.-hist. Kl*. LIV 1911, 85 n. 169) Με(λ)τίνη Μητρᾶ Μητρὶ Ἵπτᾳ εὐχήν et 96 n. 188 Μητὴρ Ἵπτα καὶ Διεὶ Σα(Βαζίῳ); v. Kern Genethl. 90. Keil has confirmed that "Hipte", not "Hippe" is the correct form of the name on the basis of a number of inscriptions which name her as "Mother Hipte".

[2] Τό μέσον is used by Plato, but he seems to say this is what the Pythagoreans call the central fire of the universe. Syrianus takes this as the middle bulk of the universe.

Commentary

After considerable doxography on the part of Proclus, Syrianus is shown to have adopted a portmanteau solution comprising the opinions of Porphyry and Iamblichus, as will be shown below. Syrianus argues that the Soul Plato speaks of here has a super-cosmic element in it that is linked to Intellect (the view of Iamblichus), but it also has a multiplicity of powers which are present in suitable ways to all parts of the universe (Porphyry's opinion).[3]

The latter notion, that the Soul is in some sense the middle of the universe and wraps around its body seems to be the consensus prior to Porphyry and Iamblichus (104.17–30ff.), because that is what the *Timaeus* says. Proclus reports that some say the middle is the center of the earth, and that the power of this center holds together the whole periphery; while others say it is the moon, in so far as it is situated between the sublunar beings and the divine being—here, it is a kind of connecting point between the generated and the divine which changes through its motion the sublunar generations;[4] while a third group say that the sun, as being situated at the heart of the universe, heats and vivifies beings.

Yet another group of opinions understand "the middle" in an external way. One group says that the middle is the circle of the equator which divides the world in two, while a second argues that the middle is the cyclical passage of stars in the signs of the zodiac, also referred to as the circle of the elliptic. Dillon postulates that the above-stated five opinions—the practice of stating five pre-Plotinian interpretations is found to be typical of Procline exegesis—are pre-Plotinian and were originally collected by Porphyry, possibly summarised by either Iamblichus or Proclus.[5]

Both Porphyry and Iamblichus criticise interpretations which accept "middle" in a local and spatial sense. Rather, they argue that the Soul is present everywhere and has authority[6] over all things according to its own movements (104.32). In the exegesis which follows, Proclus uses

[3] Porphyry says that the soul belongs to intelligible being and is consubstantial with divine Intellect because it is νοητὴ οὐσία. This account can be found in Aug. *De Civ. Dei.* X 29 (= *De Reg. An.* Fr. 10).

[4] Plotinus, *Enn.* II.1.7.1–6.

[5] Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 50 Dillon.

[6] 'Ενεξουσιαζουσάν, 105.2: This is an Iamblichean word. Proclus is possibly reading Iamblichus' monograph on the subject of the Soul. Cf. *DM* II, 3.71 and III, 17.143.

Iamblichus to obtain Porphyry's opinions. Proclus reports that Porphyry has understood Soul of the All as a mean in respect of psychic essence (105.7). It is a median between the intelligible and sensible realms, and he cites *Tim*. 34 B that the Soul is in the middle and stretches it all around the periphery.[7]

Iamblichus (105.16ff.) uses the notion of the transcendent (ἐξῃρημένος), hypercosmic (ὑπερκόσμιος) Soul, as it was introduced by Plotinus in *Ennead* IV. 3. 4, εἰ μή τις τὸ μεν ἕν στήσειεν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ μὴ πίπτον εἰς σῶμα εἶτ' ἐξ ἐκείνου τὰς πάσας, τήν τε τοῦ ὅλου καὶ ἄλλας, as an explanation for the unity of the Soul.[8] Dillon connects this Plotinian concept to Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 54 Dillon,[9] in which the Soul of the All derives from the principle of πάσης τάξεως ἡ ἀμεθεκτος ἡγεῖται μονὰς πρὸ τῶν μετεχομένων, which is, in turn, dependent upon μία καὶ ὑπερκόσμιος ψυχή at the level of Soul. Proclus, when discussing Iamblichus, goes into indirect discourse in 105.18: μηδε γάρ εἶναι, which not only signals that he is quoting Iamblichus, but that he also disagrees with him. In this passage, Iamblichus describes Soul as an independent entity that has authority (ἐνεξουσιάζουσαν) over all things, particularly encosmic souls. The monadic soul occupies a "middle" position in so far as it is present to and equally far from all things.[10] Beings, however, are all not equally distant from it, as each participates according to its power and ability.[11] Iamblichus' transcendent soul seems to envelope the cosmos.

---

[7] Trans. Dillon, Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 50 Dillon (= Proclus, *In Tim*. II, 104, 30.8–18):

"Porphyry takes this soul as being that of this universe, and explains 'the middle' in terms of the essential position of the Soul, that is, its middle position between the noetic and sensible realms. But if the passage is taken in this sense it seems to contribute nothing to the progress of Plato's argument; if we take it as meaning that the Universe is made up of Mind and Soul and Body and is a living Being possessed of Soul and Mind, we shall find the Soul to occupy a middle position in this arrangement. But since Plato has already said this, he would now seem to be merely saying again that the Soul of the cosmos is extended throughout the Universe, having been allotted in it the middle rank; for secondary things always partake of what is prior to them, as Body, the lowest essence, partakes of Soul, the middle one, and Soul of mind, which is prior to it."

[8] Dillon (1973) 326.

[9] Proclus, *In Tim*. II, 240.4ff.

[10] The Soul is assigned a status in the middle of reality—according to Iamblichus, it is simultaneously Being and Becoming. Thus, Soul in its entire substance is divided and undivided; as such, it can constitute the middle reality between Being and Becoming. See Priscianus, *In De Anima*, 240, 37. Proclus, however, argues that the soul has its substance in eternity, but its activities take place in time. See Proclus, *ET* 106–107; 191. See Steel (1978) 32; 61–71.

[11] Trans. Dillon, Iamblichus, Dillon Fr. 50 *In Tim*, (= II. 104, 19–27):

Proclus introduces the opinion of Syrianus with direct speech and γάρ, signalling that he adopts the views of his master in full, as an exegesis "more naturally akin to the views of Plato." Syrianus offers a solution which combines that of Porphyry and Iamblichus in which the Soul has a super-cosmic element in it, but also contains a part which is in the universe. He explains the transcendent element which is linked to Intellect with reference to *Phaedrus* 248 A, a passage in which Plato discusses the transcendent part of the world soul.[12] Syrianus discusses *Phaedrus* 248 A by mentioning Hipta (*OF* 199), whom the Platonists identified with the World-Soul, which is presented as having both a "head" and a multitude of other powers by which it relates to the universe. In 106.2–9, Syrianus adopts the Iamblichean understanding of the Soul's middle position, namely that the soul is οἰκείως, or suitably related to all parts of the universe.[13] In this way, part of the Soul is transcendent, part is present around the earth, sun, heavenly spheres, and the bulk of the universe.

This description of the Syrianic soul raises the question of in what way the World Soul—which ensouls Soul from within—is different from the hypostasis Soul—the transcendent Soul. Here, it seems that Syrianus is conflating the two into one entity. While the Middle Platonists did not see a difference between these two, Plotinus differentiates them in *Ennead* IV,9, a treatise on whether all souls are one. Porphyry, on the other hand,

---

"But the divine Iamblichus considers that we should understand here that Soul which is transcendent and hypercosmic and independent and exerting authority over all; for Plato is not here concerned with the Soul of the cosmos, but that soul which is imparticipable and placed over all the souls in the cosmos as their monad; for such, he says, is the nature of the first Soul, and 'the middle' refers to it as being equally present to all things, through being the Soul of no body nor yet being relative in any way, both ensouling everything equally and being equally separate from everything; for it is not less distant from some things and more from others—it is, after all, unrelated,—but equally distant from all, even though all things might not be distant from it in the same way; for it is in the things that participate that degrees of more and less arise."

See Dillon and Finamore's description of Iamblichus' psychological doctrine in (2002) 15.

[12] "Of the other souls that which best follows a god and becomes most like thereunto raises her charioteer's head into the outer region, and is carried round with the gods in the revolution" *Phaedrus* 248 A, trans. Hackforth (1972).

[13] Iamblichus, likewise, discusses *Phdr.* 248 A: "What is meant by this charioteer? Is he not the most sublime and, as many say, the principal part of us (τὸ κεφαλαιω- δέστατον)? He governs our whole body and he may view the supercelestial sphere." (Proclus, *In Tim.* III, 334, 26–27.) Trans. Steel (1978) 43. See also Hermias, *In Phdr.* 131, 2, where the Iamblichean doctrine appears, stating that the entire soul descends.

seems to conflate world Soul and the hypostasis Soul. Iamblichus, however, rejects the Porphyrian stance and separates them, distinguishing in particular the monad of Soul, which he characteristically identifies as a higher level of Soul than Porphyry. Proclus looks to the *Phaedrus* myth to show how only the faculties of the soul are in conflict when the horse and charioteer descend.[14]

[14] Proclus, *In Tim*. III, 338, 21–26; *In Alc*. 227, 9–18. See Steel (1978) 69, note 68.

Proclus, *In Tim* II. 218.20–220.3

Μίαν ἀφεῖλε τὸ πρῶτον ἀπὸ παντὸς μοῖραν. μετὰ δὲ ταύτην ἀφῄρει διπλασίαν ταύτης, τὴν δὲ αὖ τρίτην ἡμιολίαν μὲν τῆς δευτέρας, τριπλασίαν δὲ τῆς πρώτης [*Tim.* 35 B].

Ἐπὶ δὲ τούτοις κατίδωμεν ἄλλον τρόπον λόγων, ὃν ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος, ἐνέκρινε, καὶ οὐχ ἕνα τοῦτον, ἀλλὰ πολλῶν ἡμῖν καὶ θαυμαστῶν ἐπιβολῶν γεννητικόν, οὗ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐδραττόμεθα πρότερον· λέγει γὰρ οὖν, ὅτι διχῶς τὴν πρώτην ἕκαστα τούτων ἀκουστέον, ἐφ' ὅλης τε τῆς ψυχῆς ὡς μιᾶς καθ' ἕνωσιν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πολλῶν ἐν αὐτῇ λόγων καὶ τοῦ πλήθους τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ κατὰ διαίρεσιν· ἔστι γὰρ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ ἓν καὶ πλῆθος καὶ εἷς λόγος καὶ ἀριθμὸς παντοίων εἰδῶν, καὶ μιμεῖται τήν τε ὁλότητα τὴν δημιουργικὴν καὶ τὴν διάκρισιν τῶν δυνάμεων τοῦ πατρός. πρῶτον τοίνυν αὐτὴν καθ' ὅλην ἥτις ἐστὶ κατανοήσωμεν, μένουσάν τε καὶ προϊοῦσαν ἐν ἑαυτῇ καὶ ἐπιστρέφουσαν, καὶ δὴ καὶ προνοοῦσαν ἄλλως μὲν τῶν ἀύλων καὶ καθαρῶν εἰδῶν τῶν ἐγκοσμίων, ἄλλως δὲ τῶν σωμάτων ἁπάντων καὶ τῆς μεριστῆς οὐσίας, καὶ νοήσαντες μένειν μὲν αὐτὴν κατὰ τὴν μίαν μοῖραν φῶμεν, προϊέναι δὲ κατὰ τὴν δευτέραν, τῆς προόδου θείας οὔσης, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ κατὰ πάθος[a] ἢ ἀοριστίαν νοουμένης, ἐπιστρέφειν δὲ κατὰ τὴν τρίτην (τὸ γὰρ τελεσιουργὸν ἀπὸ ταύτης παραγίνεται τοῖς οὖσιν), ὁλοτελῆ δὲ οὖσαν καὶ ἐνιδρυμένην τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ μένουσαν ἐν τῷ νῷ διαιωνίως προνοεῖν καὶ τῶν δευτέρων, καὶ ἄλλως μὲν τῶν προσεχῶς αὐτῆς ἐξημμένων,[b] ἄλλως δὲ τῶν στερεῶν αὐτῶν ὄγκων, ἑκατέρων δὲ διχῶς· τά τε γὰρ προσεχῶς αὐτῆς ἀπολαύοντα καὶ πρόεισιν ἀπ' αὐτῆς καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς αὐτήν, προϊόντα μὲν κατὰ τὴν γόνιμον τῆς τετάρτης δύναμιν, ἐπιστρέφοντα δὲ κατὰ τὴν τῆς πέμπτης ἐπὶ τὴν μίαν αἰτίαν ἀναγωγήν. καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰ στερεὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἐν ὄγκοις θεωρούμενα πάντα εἴδη πρόεισι μὲν κατὰ τὴν ὀκταπλασίαν τῆς πρώτης, δυαδικὴν οὖσαν καὶ στερεὰν καὶ ἅμα μὲν γόνιμον, ἅμα δὲ ἐπὶ πᾶν προϊέναι δυναμένην, ἐπιστρέφει δὲ κατὰ τὴν εἰκοσικαιεπταπλασίαν, στερεῶν οὖσαν ἐπιστροφήν, ὡς

[a] **πλῆθος** P [b] **ἐξ αὐτῆς ἡμμένων** P

First He took one portion from the whole; then He took a portion double of this; then a third portion, half as much again as the second portion, that is, three times as much as the first

Further to this, let us consider another line of argument, which our Master chose to pursue, a simple line at that, but one productive of many remarkable conceptions, such as we have actually drawn on earlier. Therefore, he says that it is necessary to understand, first, each of these things in two ways: 1) in reference to the whole Soul as one in a unified mode and 2) in reference to the many reason-principles in it (the Soul) and the multiplicity present in it by division. For the Soul is both one and many, both a single reason-principle and a sum-total of all kinds of forms, and it imitates both the demiurgic creation as a whole and the division of powers within the Father. First, then, let us consider what is the Soul as a whole, remaining within itself and proceeding and returning, and indeed exercising providence in one way over immaterial and pure forms within the cosmos, and in another way over all the bodies and partial beings, and having considered (this), let us say that it remains in respect of one "portion", but it proceeds in respect of a second, since the procession is divine, but not to be considered as accidental or unlimited, while it returns in respect of the third (it is from this that perfection arises in beings), and thus, while being complete and established in the intelligible realm, and remaining in Intellect, it eternally exercises providential care over secondary things, in one way over those beings situated proximate to it, and in another over solid bodies, and each of these in two ways: for those things which draw immediate benefit from it, proceed from it and return to it, proceeding according to their productive power of the fourth "portion", and returning according to the power of the fifth, which leads back to their first cause. And all these three-dimensional forms which are viewed as solid bodies, proceed according to that "portion" which is eight times the first, being dyadic and solid, and likewise generative and at the same time capable of proceeding in all directions, while it returns according to that which is twenty-seven times the first, being the return of

τριαδικὴν καὶ ὡς τῆς ταὐτοῦ φύσεως· τοιοῦτο γὰρ τὸ περιττόν. τρεῖς οὖν αἱ πρόοδοι καὶ τρεῖς αἱ ἐπιστροφαὶ περὶ τὴν μίαν καὶ ἡνωμένην στάσιν τῆς ψυχῆς. διὸ καὶ τρεῖς οἱ ἄρτιοι καὶ οἱ περιττοὶ τρεῖς, ἀπὸ μονάδος προϊόντες· καὶ συμπλέκονται ἀλλήλοις, ὅτι καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ πρόεισί τε αὐτὴ καὶ ἐπιστρέφει, καὶ ἐπιστραφεῖσα παράγει τὰς πρώτας αὐτῆς ὑποδοχὰς καὶ τὸ πρώτως ἐσχηματισμένον· καὶ παράγουσα μὲν αὐτὸ διάστασιν αὐτῷ δίδωσι καὶ ὄγκον, ἐπιστρέφουσα δὲ αὐτὸ σφαιροειδὲς ποιεῖ· καὶ τοῦτο τοιοῦτον ὑποστήσασα καὶ τὸν κόσμον ἐν αὐτῷ παράγει, τὴν μὲν πρόοδον ἀρτιακῶς, τὴν δὲ ἐπιστροφὴν περισσοειδῶς ἀπεργαζομένη, κυβικῶς δὲ ἀμφοτέρας, ὅτι τὴν τῶν στερεῶν ἀπογέννησιν ἐποιεῖτο καὶ ἐπιστροφήν. τριπλῆ οὖν ἡ πρόοδος καὶ ἐπιστροφή, ἣ μὲν ἀσχημάτιστος, ἣ δὲ ἐσχηματισμένη πρώτως, ἣ δὲ ἐσχηματισμένη δευτέρως, πάντα δὲ ὡς ἐν ἀριθμοῖς.

Commentary

In 35 B, Plato discusses the formation of Soul from a blending of the Same, Other, and Being. These are then portioned into seven parts arranged in two triads. As one might imagine, the Platonists certainly had a field day with this account. Proclus describes and discounts the customary astronomical interpretations of the five anonymous Middle Platonists (212.12 ff.). Dillon neatly summarises these as follows:[1]

1. οἳ μέν: wish to relate the seven numbers to the seven planetary spheres
2. οἳ δέ: the distances of the seven planetary spheres to the center of the earth
3. οἳ δε, εἰς τὰς κινήσεις: the movement of the spheres
4. οἳ δέ, εἰς τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἀστέρων: the various sizes of the planets
5. οἳ δέ, εἰς τὰ τάχη τῶν κύκλων: their speeds of revolution.

Proclus dismisses all five: 1) modern astronomical theories disprove them; 2) Plato only generally describes planets as being greater or smaller than one another; 3) Plato is describing the formation of the Soul rather than the cosmos.[2]

[1] Dillon (1973) 332.
[2] Dillon (1973) 332.

solid bodies, as being triadic and of the nature of the same. For this is the nature of odd number. Therefore, there are three processions and three returns involved in the simple and fixed unity of the Soul. Because of this there are three even and three odd numbers, proceeding from one. And they are intertwined with each other, as the Soul proceeds and reverts, and in reverting, it creates the first receptacles of itself, and the primal object of structuring, and producing it, it gives to it dimension and volume, and in returning, it makes it spherical. And undertaking this, it makes an ordered structure in it, continuing its procession through even numbers, and its reversion through odd ones, and in each case to the level of cubes, because reversion is also a generation of solids. So then, the procession and the return are both triple, the first devoid of structuring, the second involved in a primary structure, and the third in secondary structures, but all in accordance with numbers.

Five later commentators reportedly deal more seriously with this passage: Amelius, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Theodorus, and Syrianus. Dillon deals with Amelius, Porphyry and Iamblichus in *Iamblichi Chalcidensis*.[3] As Syrianus relies heavily on Iamblichus, we will repeat much of that argument; however, it is sufficient to summarise Amelius and Porphyry's arguments. In 213.9 ff. Amelius arranges the series of seven numbers into a monad and three pairs, with the pairs representing better and worse daimones, men, and wild and tame animals. Porphyry (214.4 ff.) does not give individual characteristics to the seven numbers, but says that the numbers represent the scale of harmony in the Soul.

Syrianus' interpretation closely follows the interpretation of Iamblichus, who identifies the seven numbers with an aspect of the internal mechanism of the Soul. Especially important is that both Iamblichus and Syrianus use 35 B to describe the process of μόνη-πρόοδος-ἐπιστροφή: for Iamblichus, this is a process within a given hypostasis, whereas we will see that, for Syrianus, 35 B denotes a process specific to Soul and particular to its own demiurgic, providential activity. Both are interpretations of numbers of the soul and ways of arranging the seven numbers. Syrianus' commentary on *Tim*. 35 B closely follows Iamblichus' interpretation of this passage, as reported in II.215.5 ff.:

[3] Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 53 Dillon (= Proclus, *In Tim*. II, 215.5).

> "The philosopher Iamblichus, on the other hand, sings the praises of the numbers (under discussion) with all his power as containing various remarkable properties, calling the Monad the cause of Sameness and Unity, the Dyad the organiser of Procession and Division, the Triad leader of Return for what has gone forth, the Tetrad the true embracer of all harmony, containing in itself all the reason-principles and showing forth in itself the second cosmic order, the Ennead the creator of true perfection and similarity, being the perfect product of perfect components and partaking of the nature of the same; he calls the Ogdoad the cause of Procession to all points and of Progression through all, and finally, the Heptakaieikosad the force stimulating Return even of the lowest elements (of the Universe), in order that on each side of the Tetrad there might be a static, a progressing, and a returning principle, on the one side on the primary level, on the other, on the secondary level; for the Ennead has a relationship to the Monad, being 'a new one', and the Ogdoad to the Dyad, being the cube from it, and the Eikosiheptad to the Triad for the same reason. Through the former he grants to the simpler entities stayings and processions and returns, through the second to the more composite, and the Tetrad, being in the middle, through being a square has the quality of proceeding, through being filled with all the reason-principles coming from the monad, the quality of returning. And these are symbols of divine and esoteric things."[4]

Dillon draws an extremely helpful diagram of this process, whereby Iamblichus divides activity into two triads: one for the noetic world (represented by the monad, dyad, and triad), another for the world of becoming (ennead, ogdoad, and heptakaieikosad), with the tetrad as the mediator between the two triads, "the embracer of all harmony."[5] The tetrad projects forth a second realm of reality as the ennead, for true completion and similarity. The second triad also partakes in the nature of the same as the cause of all procession. Iamblichus makes clear that there is a return even of the lowest level of reality. In his discussion, Iamblichus bases the two triads on Plato's division in 35 B of the parts of the soul into three evens (2, 4, 8 as the second, fourth, and sixth portions of the soul) and three odds (3, 9, 27 as the third, fifth, and seventh portions of the soul).

Theodore of Asine offers a new theory (215.29 ff.). After the one, there is a triple soul: Soul in itself (ἡ καθ' αὐτό); another that is a universal Soul (ἡ καθόλου), and a third that is the Soul of the universe (ἄλλην τὴν τοῦδε τοῦ παντός). The soul engages in a motion in three stages, each of

[4] Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 53 Dillon. Translation Dillon (1973).
[5] Dillon (1973) 332. Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 53 Dillon.

which corresponds to the motion of the three souls (216.20). Next, rather than discussing the seven portions, Theodore connects the division to celestial things in a series of doubles, and sublunaries in a series of triples (216.20ff.). He assigns the numbers to each of the elements: 7 to earth, 11 to fire, 9 to air, 13 to air. These elements are harmoniously connected through 1, 2, 3, 4, so that earth as seven is a combination of 1, 2, 4; water is a combination of 2, 3, 4; air is a combination of 3, 4, 6; and fire is a combination of 2, 3, 6. Theodore's theory, thus, while displaying the Pythagorean connection between elements and numbers as found in Iamblichus' thought, seems to accord more with that of Porphyry or the Middle Platonists than his immediate predecessor.

Syrianus possibly uses Theodore's distinction between types of souls, although Syrianus limits his division to two: the whole Soul and the souls comprising it. Although he innovates by dividing the Soul into two categories, Syrianus imitates Iamblichus' activity of the Soul as it corresponds to the seven Platonic portions. Because the Soul is both one, as a reason principle, and many, because it has division, it imitates the demiurgic completeness. The principle of oneness in the Soul allows for its triadic activity of remaining in itself, proceeding, and returning. This higher aspect is also responsible for exercising providence over pure forms in the cosmos. The aspect of many in the Soul reflects the Soul as the sum total of forms, or the souls comprising it.

This aspect of Soul presides over bodies and partial beings. This dual aspect, likewise, allows the Soul to imitate powers within the Father (who is at a higher level than the Demiurge proper) exhibited at the time of demiurgic creation. Imitating the holistic activity of the Demiurge, Soul remains in Intellect in respect of one portion and comes to the secondary things most close to it. Hence, being complete and rooted in the intelligible world and remaining in Intellect, soul exercises *pronoia* over secondary things. With respect to its second portion, it proceeds individually to preside over individuals. Syrianus clarifies that the Soul proceeds providentially, and is, hence, not affected by the procession as subject to *pathos* or Unlimitedness.

The last five portions relate to the functions of the first two. When the Soul does proceed, it proceeds with respect to 1) immediate secondary things; 2) the less immediate solid bodies. This idea governs the next series of portions. The third portion is *moira*, which endows completion over individuals, as a kind of revertive power proper to the second portion. The fourth and fifth portions are more specific kinds of procession and return with respect to the providential care of the most

proximate secondary things. Soul proceeds to proximate things according to the productive power of the fourth portion and returns in virtue of the fifth portion. With regard to the less immediate solid bodies, soul proceeds according to its eightness (2^3) and returns with respect to its twenty-sevenness (3^3). Procession thus takes place through even numbers, *epistrophē* through odd, both of which are cubed.

Lines 219.4 ff. describe the demiurgic function of Soul. Syrianus gives the Soul three processions and returns respective to its own self, proximate, and three-dimensional objects. As the Soul proceeds from the monad, it creates its own receptacle and the world. Producing it, it gives it dimensionality and bulk. By turning back, Soul makes the world spherical. Having produced this as such, it generates a cosmos.

Syrianus' interpretation borrows from Theodore and Iamblichus. From Theodore, Syrianus derives the concept of dividing functions of Soul into categories. Much is borrowed from Iamblichus: the nature of the Soul's procession, as well as the concept of the triadic motion of the soul, an activity divided into particular motions, each of which correspond to one of Plato's seven portions.[6] Syrianus' two-fold division, however, occurs not in formulating two triads, as does Iamblichus, but in dividing the function of the Soul into two. The major innovation here seems to be the holistic and individual concern of the soul—Syrianus makes two activities out of one entity, which makes this structure seem primed for a division of Soul into a lower and higher order.

[6] See Syrianus, *In Tim*.fr. 13 Wear for a discussion of the Soul's essence as middle. Iamblichus discusses the triadic motion of soul in Ps. Simpl. *In De Anima* p. 6, 5 where the Soul processes from itself and returns to itself, while abiding in itself. Steel argues that in so far as Iamblichus' Soul proceeds out of itself, it resembles the divisible world, but in so far as it remains, it is similar to the purely indivisible Being. See Steel (1978) 65 for a discussion of how the Iamblichean Soul remains in itself and simultaneously proceeds from itself as a whole, especially with reference to Proclus, *In Tim*. II, 215.5–29 and Dodds (1963) xix–xxii and 220–221.

Proclus, *In Tim.* II. 253.23–254.4

Καὶ τὸν μὲν ἔξω, τὸν δὲ ἐντὸς ἐποιεῖτο τῶν κύκλων. Τὴν μὲν οὖν ἔξω φορὰν ἐπεφήμισεν εἶναι τῆς ταὐτοῦ φύσεως, τὴν δὲ ἐντὸς τῆς θατέρου [*Tim.* 36 C].

Ἀλλ' ἀποροῦσι πρὸς ταῦτά τινες, ὅπως τῆς ψυχῆς ὁμοιομεροῦς οὔσης ὃ μὲν ταὐτοῦ τῶν κύκλων, ὃ δὲ θατέρου, καὶ ὃ μὲν ἐντός, ὃ δὲ ἐκτὸς ἀποπέφανται· ταῦτα γὰρ ἀνατρέπειν τὴν ὁμοιομέρειαν.

ὁ μὲν οὖν Πορφύριος ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσθητὰ φερόμενος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς μίξεις τὰς ἐνύλους τὸ μελίκρατον καὶ τὸ οἰνόμελι ἄνω καὶ κάτω θρυλεῖ πᾶν μὲν ὁμοιομερὲς ὄν, ἄλλοις δὲ ἄλλο πάθος ἐμποιοῦν· τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἡ οἰνώδεια μᾶλλον, τοὺς δὲ ἡ γλυκύτης διατίθησιν.

ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος πατὴρ ἠξίου πρέπουσαν τοῖς ἀύλοις καὶ ἀσωμάτοις τὴν μῖξιν τῶν γενῶν θεωρεῖν. ἣ δέ ἐστιν οὐ κατὰ σύγχυσιν τῶν εἰδῶν οὐδὲ κατὰ σύμφθαρσιν τῶν δυνάμεων, ἀλλ' ἐκείνων σῳζομένων καθ' ἕνωσίν τε καὶ τὴν δι' ἀλλήλων χώρησιν.

And the outer motion He ordained to be the Motion of the Same, and the inner motion the Motion of the Other.

But some at this point raise the difficulty how, if soul is the same uniform substance, one of the circles has been declared a circle of the same, the other circle that of the other, the one being interior, the other exterior; for these distinctions tend to undermine its uniformity.

Porphyry, being distracted in the direction of the sensible realities and material mixtures, rambles at length about mixtures of milk and honey and of wine and honey, which, although on the one hand they are are homoeomeric as a whole, on the other hand, the different kinds produce each a different effect; some are more affected by the flavour of wine, others by the sweetness of the honey.

Our Father, however, preferred to consider the mixture of kinds in a way proper to immaterial and incorporeal entities. This (mixture) does not include a co-mingling of kinds nor a mutual destruction of their powers, but comes about with the preservation of their identity along with their mutual co-penetration.

Commentary

The two circles of the soul here refer to the construction of soul by the Demiurge out of the rings of Sameness and Otherness: the outer ring contains the nature of the Same, while the inner contains the nature of the Other. These two are joined together forming a cross shape and revolve in opposite directions from one another. What is of interest to Porphyry and Syrianus is how there can be two circles of soul in light of the fact that it is a uniform substance.

The survey in this *aporia* affords the rare situation, where Syrianus responds to an attempt at a solution from Porphyry without mention of Iamblichus' opinion. It is highly improbable that Iamblichus had nothing to say on the topic; rather, Syrianus most likely adopted the Iamblichean position on this particular *aporia*. Iamblichus discusses the two soul-circles of *Timaeus* 36 C (II. 252.21), although nothing is recorded there on his view regarding mixture and the two souls.[1] In *In Tim.* 334.3 ff. Proclus says that Iamblichus argues against Theodore, who says that the soul is chained to the circle of the Same and shaken from the circle of the Other (334.1–3). Iamblichus takes these two circles as describing types of *Nous*. That is why he is excluded from this discussion presently.

Porphyry is criticised by Proclus for adducing examples from the physical world because the mixture of the physical involves diminution of physical powers in so far as both the wine and the honey have less potency when mixed (253.26–30). At the intelligible level, components of a complex entity maintain their unity and inter-pentetration of powers, whereas honey and wine are thoroughly affected by each other and changed when mixed. Matter is an inappropriate example as it is not capable of preserving individual qualities. Syrianus argues that imma-

[1] Proclus, *In Tim.* II, 252.21. Iamblichus, *In Tim.* Dillon fr. 56, trans. Dillon (1973): "These two circles the divine Iamblichus referred respectively to the Mind separated from souls and the unseparated Mind, as he does the 'motion carried round in the same place' which encompasses them round about, inasmuch as the former contains the two souls, while the latter is in them, and the former is unmixed with the other life and the powers of the Soul, while the latter is mixed with them and organises them, for which reason the Whole Soul acts in a state of rest and is united to the Demiurge himself." The motions of the Same and Other are here analogous to νοῦς χωριστός and νοῦς χωριστός. Iamblichus makes *nous* inherent in souls and their motions types of souls. Iamblichus' interpretation draws in levels of metaphysics in so far as the Unparticipated Intellect embraces the two souls, but remains distinct from them, while the immanent intellect acts within the soul and orders their lives and powers. Distinction and Mixture are addressed, but only with regard to Intellect and Souls.

terial things can be mixed with the peculiarity that each blending of the mixture remain unconfused. While a mutual blending of powers may occur, each power is preserved.

The argument about the mixture of the two circles of souls resurfaces in the discussion about the descent of the soul. Iamblichus makes the point that the soul does not remain above because the two circles of the soul are engaged in different activities which distorts the soul and moves it below.[2] Damascius argues that when the soul descends, both parts of the soul descend (the circle of the other, which is thrown into confusion at descent, and the circle of the same, which is in a state of intellectual activity). Thus, the entire soul is bound up as one despite being engaged in different activities.[3]

[2] Steel makes this point with reference to Proclus, *In Tim*. 333.28–30 in (1978) 38.
[3] Damascius, *In Parm*. II, 254.10–12. See Steel (1978) 50.

Proclus, *In Tim.* II. 272.3–273.26

Τὴν δὲ ἐντὸς σχίσας ἑξαχῇ ἑπτὰ κύκλους ἀνίσους κατὰ τὴν τοῦ διπλασίου καὶ τριπλασίου διάστασιν ἑκάστην οὐσῶν ἑκατέρων τριῶν κατὰ τἀναντία μὲν ἀλλήλοις προσέταξεν ἰέναι τοὺς κύκλους, τάχει δὲ τρεῖς μὲν ὁμοίως, τοὺς δὲ τέτταρας ἀλλήλοις τε καὶ τοῖς τρισὶν ἀνομοίως, ἐν λόγῳ δὲ φερομένους [*Tim.* 36D].

εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ σύμπασαν τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς σύστασιν εἰς τὰς θείας ἀναπέμπειν τάξεις—-εἰκόνας γὰρ ἔχει πασῶν–ληπτέον τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν τῶν πρώτων περὶ αὐτῆς λόγων, ἐν οἷς ἔλεγε [34BC] δεδημιουργῆσθαι τὴν ψυχὴν οὐχ ὡς ἡμεῖς φαμεν, νεωτέραν τοῦ σώματος, ἀλλὰ γενέσει καὶ ἀρετῇ προτέραν καὶ πρεσβυτέραν, ὡς δεσπότιν καὶ ἄρξουσαν· ἐκεῖθεν γὰρ ὡρμήθη λέγειν περὶ αὐτῆς ὁ Τίμαιος, τὰ πρεσβεῖα δοὺς αὐτῇ πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν τῆς σωματικῆς ὅλης συστάσεως.

λεκτέον δὴ οὖν ἀνάγεσθαι τὴν πρόοδον αὐτῆς ὡς μὲν ἄρχουσαν καὶ δεσπότιν εἰς τὴν πάντων ἀρχήν, ὡς δὲ τριπλεκῆ καὶ ἅμα[a] ἡνωμένην ὑπόστασιν λαχοῦσαν εἰς τὴν ἀκρότητα τῶν νοητῶν ἀναπέμψομεν, καὶ ὡς ἐξ οὐσίας καὶ ταὐτοῦ καὶ θατέρου γενομένην εἰς πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν ὄντως πλάτος, οὗ τὸ μὲν ἄκρον ἡ οὐσία κατέχει καὶ τὸ ὄν, τὸ δὲ μέσον ὁ αἰὼν τῆς ἐν ταὐτῷ διαμονῆς πᾶσιν αἴτιος ὤν, τὸ δὲ πέρας τὸ νοητὸν ζῷον ἑτεροιῶσαν ἑαυτὸ ταῖς εἰς τὰ νοητὰ ζῷα προόδοις, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ ὅλον ἐκεῖ τὸ ἐξ ἀνομοίων μερῶν, ὡς ὁ Παρμενίδης [129A ss] διδάσκει· τοιοῦτον δὲ καὶ τὸ τριπλεκὲς ὅλον τοῦτο στοιχείων ἀνομοίων φύραμα γεγονός.

ὡς δὲ ἀριθμὸν αὐτόγονον καὶ νοητὸν εἰς τὴν ἀκρότητα τῶν νοητῶν καὶ νοερῶν διακόσμων· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ὁ πρῶτος ἀριθμὸς μετὰ τῆς ἑτερότητος, ἐπεὶ καὶ πρώτην ἐκείνην τὴν τάξιν, ὡς οἱ θεολόγοι φασί, τεθεάμεθα σειρῶν οὖσαν αἰτίαν κατ᾽ ἀριθμὸν[b] διῃρημένων. ἐκεῖ δὲ καὶ ὁ

[a] **ἅμα** om Q [b] **ἀριθμῶν** P

Whereas He split the inner Revolution in six places into seven unequal circles, according to each of the intervals of the double and triple intervals, three double and three triple. These two circles then He appointed to go in contrary directions; and of the seven circles into which He split the inner circle, He appointed three to revolve at an equal speed, the other four to go at speeds equal neither with each other nor with the speed of the aforesaid three, yet moving at speeds the ratios of which one to another are those of natural integers.

But if we are to relate the entire structure of the soul to the divine orders—for the [soul] preserves images of everything—we should take our start from the first statement concerning the soul, in which he said [34BC] that "the soul is created, not as we say, younger than the body, but prior to and older than the body in generation and excellence as befits a ruler and master," for it is from this that Timaeus takes his start in talking about the soul, having given to it the dominant role for the generation of the entire corporeal structure (sc. of the world).

We must say, then, that the procession of the soul as "ruler and master" is to be linked back to the first principle of all things, but as being allotted a three-fold and at the same time unified existence, we refer it back to the summit of the intelligible realm; and as being composed from Essence and the Same and Other, in effect, to the whole noetic level of Being, of which Essence and existence occupies the summit, while Eternity occupies the middle as being the cause of remaining in the same state of all things, but Intelligible Living Being occupies the (lower) limit, as differentiating itself by its processions into intelligible living beings, since the whole there is [generated] from different parts, as Parmenides teaches [*Parm*. 129A ff]. Such is this three-fold whole, coming into being as a mixture of dissimilar elements.

But as a self-produced and intelligible number, we shall refer it to the summit of intelligible-intellective orders. For there is situated the first number that accompanies Otherness, since, as the theologians say, it is that class first that we can see as cause of series that are divided according

Παρμενίδης τὸν ὅλον ὑπέστησεν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ἐκεῖθεν πάντα τὰ ὄντα[a] ἐξέφηνεν.

ὡς δὲ ἐκ τῶν τριῶν μεσοτήτων συγκειμένην καὶ ὅλον οὖσαν ἐκ μερῶν ὁμοίων—πάντα γὰρ ἐκ τῶν τριῶν ἐστι στοιχείων—εἰς τὴν ὁλότητα τὴν νοερὰν τὴν συνεκτικὴν τῶν τε ὅλων καὶ τῶν μερῶν· αἱ γὰρ τρεῖς μεσότητες ἀπ' ἐκείνων ἐφήκουσι τῶν συνεκτικῶν θεῶν, ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου τοῦ περιέχοντος τοὺς λοιποὺς καὶ καθ' ἕνα λόγον πάντα συνάγοντος εἰς ἕνα κόσμον καὶ μίαν ἕνωσιν, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ δευτέρου τοῦ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλην, τοῖς δὲ ἄλλην ἐνδιδόντος σύνδεσιν,[b] μείζοσι μὲν μείζονα, ἐλάσσοσι δὲ ἐλάσσονα, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ τρίτου τοῦ τοῖς τρίτοις ἐλλάμποντος ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ κοινωνίαν, παρ' οἷς τὰ μὲν ἐλάττονα κατὰ τὸν ὄγκον ἥνωται μᾶλλον, τὰ δὲ μείζονα ἐλασσόνως· τοῦτο δὴ τὸ τῆς ἀριθμητικῆς μεσότητος ἐξαίρετον.

ὡς δὲ ἰδέαν ἔχουσαν τοιάνδε καὶ διασχημάτισιν καὶ εὐθείᾳ προόδῳ καὶ ἐπιστροφῇ κυκλικῇ χρωμένην, καθ' ἣν προείπομεν [p. 247s] αἰτίαν, εἰς τὴν τοῦ νοεροῦ σχήματος τριάδα· τὸ γὰρ εὐθὺ πρῶτον ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ περιφερές, διὸ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἰδέᾳ τῆς ψυχῆς γραμμαί τε παρελαμβάνοντο καὶ κύκλοι μετ' ἀλλήλων τε καὶ χωρίς.

ὡς δὲ δυνάμεις ὑποδεξαμένην μοναδικάς τε καὶ ἑβδομαδικὰς εἰς τὴν ἑβδομάδα τὴν νοεράν, ὡς δὲ μέσην τῶν τε αἰσθητῶν καὶ νοητῶν καὶ ὡς ἀφομοιοῦσαν τὰ αἰσθητὰ τοῖς νοητοῖς εἰς τὴν ἡγεμονικὴν σειράν· αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν ἀφομοιωτικὴ τῶν δευτέρων πρὸς τὰς ἐνιαίας ἀκρότητας.

ὡς δὲ ἐνεργοῦσαν ἐνεργείας διττάς, τὰς μὲν προστάτιδας τῶν αἰσθητῶν, τὰς δὲ τῶν νοητῶν ἀντεχομένας, πρὸς τοὺς ἀπολύτους, οἳ καὶ ἅπτονται καὶ οὐχ ἅπτονται τοῦ παντός. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν διὰ βραχέων εἰρημένα τοὺς παρηκολουθηκότας ὑπομνήσει τοῖς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν συγγράμμασιν, ἐν οἷς περὶ τούτων ἐκφαίνει τὰ ἀπόρρητα τοῦ Πλάτωνος ὄντως νοήματα.

[a] **τὰ ὄντα** om Q [b] **σύνδεσιν** P: **σύστασιν** Q

to number. For it is there that Parmenides established number as a whole and it is for that source that he revealed all beings.[1]

But again, as being composed of three means and constituting a whole of similar parts—for all things come from these three elements[2]—we will refer it to the entire intellective realm, embracing both wholes and parts. For the three means arise from the connective gods, the one deriving from the first which embraces the remaining ones and, while according to a single ratio, gathers all things into one ordered whole and a single unity, while a second derives from the second, which grants to different things different degrees of cohesion, greater to the greater, less to the less, and the third derives from the third god, which beams cohesiveness from itself upon the third level of being, among which those lesser with respect to their mass are more unified, but those with a greater mass are less unified. Indeed, this is the particular trait of the arithmetic mean.

But inasmuch as possessing such a form and shape as this and making use of procession in a straight line and cyclical return, for the reason we have stated earlier, we will refer it to the triad of the intellective order. For both the straight line, first of all, and circle, appear on that level, on account of which, also in the form of the soul, lines and circles are included both with each other and separately.

But inasmuch as it receives both monadic and hebdomadic powers, we will refer it to the intellective hebdomad, but as being median between the sensible and intelligible realm and assimilating the sensible to the noetic, we will refer it to the series of leader gods [129.29]. For this is what assimilates secondary entities to their unitary summits.

But again, as acting according to a double activity, the one presiding over the sensible, the other laying hold of the intelligible, we will refer it to the absolute gods,[3] who both fasten and are not connected with the universe. Therefore, these brief remarks will serve as a reminder to those who have studied the writings of our Master, in which he has truly revealed on these subjects the secret thoughts of Plato.

---

[1] Sc. in the second hypothesis of the *Parmenides*, esp. 142 D ff.

[2] Being, Same and Other.

[3] The reference is to Proclus, *In Tim*. II. 247.8 here. This is Proclus speaking, but that passage, too, is possibly inspired by Syrianus.

Commentary

This passage, on the Demiurge's division of the circle of the Same into seven circles, is a fine panorama of Syrianic metaphysics. Elements of the soul are here linked to various levels of the noetic cosmos, emphasizing the relationship between the noetic and noeric cosmos, similar to that which is found in the Iamblichean and Procline universes.

The first explanations given to the lemma (263.26–265.28) are the astronomical accounts typical of the Middle Platonists who take a material account of the passage. Five accounts are listed, all confining themselves to purely astronomical considerations.[4] The fifth account is most relevant to the passage at hand: this literal opinion states that Plato has said that the Demiurge has made the circles go in opposite directions so that the circle of the one (diurnal revolution) is opposed to the seven planetary circles. This explanation Proclus declares to be more akin to that of the truth, since it dispenses with the theory of epicycles and eccentric movements, which are alien to the doctrine of Plato (264.14). Proclus goes on to argue in 264.27 ff. that astronomical interpretations also include the factor of speed. Three circles are said to be of the same speed, including planets such as the Sun, Mercury, and Venus; while four are of unequal speed: Moon, Saturn, Mars, and Jupiter (*Rep*. X 617 AB).

After dealing with the astronomical data on the cosmic level, Proclus next applies the circles of *Timaeus* 36 D to the soul (265.29–267.8). The initial description relates the two circles to an astronomical explanation. Proclus here calls the circle of the Same that of the fixed sphere, which imitates the uniform and intellective power of the soul. The circle of the Other is that of the planets and is a multiform power. These circles are explained further in 267.8–268.14, whereby the circles and the soul are divided into another category—rather than Same and Other, Proclus

[4] 1. Some say that the moon and sun move on their epicycles in motions opposite that of the revolution of the fixed spheres (264.1);

2. While the other planets perform a regular and uniform revolution, and an irregular revolution (264.3);

3. Or, alternatively, Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars make their initial appearances, after their union with the sun in the morning, because the sun travels faster than they do along the elliptic (the sense of τὰ ἡγούμενα here) (264.5);

4. Or alternatively, planets experience pauses, progressions and return, and they make these motions in opposition to one another; some in a northerly direction, others, in a southerly (264.10).

introduces the division of monad and hebdomad. Monad and hebdomad represent an important division that relates both to the soul (with particular reference to the circles of the soul in *Tim.* 36 D) and the intellect. In *Platonic Theology* V, the hebdomad is the structure particular to the divine Intellect: the noeric realm is hence comprised of a seventh entity, the "membrane", followed by two monadic triads.[5] In *Platonic Theology* V. 4.19 ff., Proclus further relates that Plato divided the Soul into one circle and seven circles—a monad and hebdomad. The hebdomadic structure of the planets and soul are two images that are related to the noeric realm in *Platonic Theology* V,4, where Proclus shows how the intellective divinities are the causes of the soul as the Demiurge engenders the circles of the soul in a hebdomadic structure. Proclus stresses the relationship between the circles of the monad and hebdomad by explaining that the monad is the whole soul which precedes the hebdomad (*In Tim.* 267.10–15). Moreover, the circles of the same and other are also divided as monad and hebdomad, with the circle of the same as monad, in opposition to the hebdomad, as the circle of other (268.15–270.3). This structure of monad and dyad, with dyad being further divided into a monad and a dyad, is a bit confusing, but certainly in accord with Syrianus' concept of the primordial monad and dyad. This is rather the point of *In Tim.* 273.15 ff., where the soul is intellective as it receives the monadic and hebdomadic powers.

The circles of Same and Other relate to the soul because the soul contains the causes of similarity and dissimilarity between the circles (268.3). The monad and hebdomad are the circles of the Same and Other which the Soul of the universe embraces as all the parts of universe (268.15). The hebdomad is a division of four odds (1, 3, 9, 27) and three evens (2, 4, 8).[6]

---

[5] For a discussion of Proclus' numeric structuring of the universe, see Damascius, *In Parm.* R. II, p. 132, 5–4., whereby Damascius relates the following:

noetic gods: divided into levels of monad, dyad, triad, depending on the power of the particular god
noetic-noeric gods: divided into tetrad, pentad, hexad
noeric: divided into hebdomad

For a discussion of Damascius' critique of the Procline intellective hebdomad, see Saffrey and Westerink (1978) xviii.

[6] These numbers have the following Pythagorean analogies: 1 = truth; 2 = beauty; 3 = proportion; 4 = stability; 9 = movement; 8 = sameness; 27 = otherness. See *In Tim.* 270.19 and Saffrey and Westerink (1968) 311, note 3.

In Syrianus' discussion on *Tim.* 36 D, he first shows that soul is prior to body in generation (272.3–9) and then spends the remainder of the fragment relating soul to levels of the noetic world. In 272.11 ff., soul is related to three levels:

1. The One
2. The summit of Noetic Being (ἀκρότητα τῶν νοητῶν), as unified and triple (τριπλεκής), self-produced and intelligible number
3. The whole level of the noetic being (πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν ὄντως πλάτος)—composed of essence (οὐσία) and same and other. This level relates to the three levels of the noetic world:
    a. essence and existence (ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὸ ὄν): summit, cause of return
    b. eternity (ὁ αἰών): middle, cause of remaining
    c. Intelligible Living Being (τὸ νοητόν ζῷον): lower limit, cause of procession.

Here, Syrianus sets forth that soul, in the noeric world, has analogues in the noetic level, which is further broken into triads of being, life, and mind. Soul, as noeric, relates to the One, insofar as it is unified, and to the noetic world, the first triad for which is listed by Syrianus as ἕν ὄν, αἰών and νοητὸν ζῷον. Soul participates in each level of νοῦς μεθέκτος and through it is joined to the divine intellect.[7] The two are linked in particular, in so far as the lowest level of the noetic realm, according to Platonist metaphysics, is soul's own highest element. Each of these levels, moreover, engages in the Platonic activity of remaining, procession, and return. The third element, τὸ νοητόν ζῷον, forms in the Paradigm (the highest element of the noetic realm) and then projects itself in the physical world. Hence, Syrianus cites *Parmenides* 129 A as proof text of this activity, where the whole is said to be formed from like and unlike parts (τὸ ὅλον ἐκεῖ τὸ ἐξ ἀνομοίων μερῶν). The soul is further related to the triad of the intellect in so far as it progresses in a straight line and returns in a circular motion.[8]

[7] See Iamblichus on soul's participation of Intellect in his exegesis of *Tim.* 36 CD, Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 55 and 56 Dillon.

[8] The monad and hebdomad are numbers of circular movement and circular movement is particular to the intellect, see *In Tim.* II, 95.3–4 and Saffrey and Westerink (1987) xiv. Damascius, *In Parm.* p. 131.13–132.5 (W-C): Procession proceeds from a monad towards a triad. At the point of reversion, the monad becomes a hebdomad. Intellect leaves from the intelligible realm and then reverts towards it.

Lines 272.22ff. offer a survey of Syrianus' metaphysics by way of his interpretation of the second hypothesis of the *Parmenides*.[9] For the second hypothesis of the *Parmenides* he gives four different conclusions based on the single syllogism, "if the One is". Each conclusion defines a degree of being according to a class of gods (henads) which participate in Being.[10] Each class, moreover, is governed by a particular property: such as Whole, Multiplicity, Limitlessness, Limit.[11] In this way, Syrianus demonstrates the uniqueness of each divine class, but also underscores their unity, in so far as they all relate to the premise, "the One is".

Lines 272.22–29, for instance, concern soul as an intelligible and self-produced number, a notion which re-appears in proposition 189 of the *Elements of Theology*.[12] Here, Syrianus alludes to *Parmenides* 143 C 4–144 E 7, which he interprets as a discussion of the summit, or first triad, of the noetic-noeric realm, to which he attaches the property of totality. Soul is related to the summit of the noetic-noeric realm in so far as it contains an intelligible aspect which allows it to be conjoined to the intelligible realm, just as the noetic-noeric realm unites to the intelligible realm through its summit. The first triad of the noetic-noeric realm is also charaterised by essence and Eternity,[13] also found in the remaining aspect of soul which allows it to move, on the one hand, to the higher realm (before descending again to the lower). The summit of the soul, thus, is particularly related to the first triad, in so far as its eternal aspect participates in the intelligible world.[14]

In 272.30–273.9, referencing *Parm*. 144 E 8–145 C 4, Syrianus applies a scheme of wholes and parts to the degree of being. This degree of being, moreover, is the mark of the second triad of the noetic-noeric realm, a realm inhabited by the connective gods (συνεκτικοὶ θεόι).[15] The second triad contains the συνεκτικοὶ θεόι which connect the intelligible realm with the intellectual realm. Soul relates to this realm in so far as it is an efficient cause for connection. While body is not able to make such a connection between disparate realms, souls, being incorporeal and self-moving, can unite the prior intelligible to the posterior intellectual realm.

[9] See Saffrey and Westerink (1978) xlix.
[10] See Proclus, *In Parm*. VI, col. 1049.37–1050.25.
[11] Proclus, *In Parm*. VI, col. 1061.31–1063.5.
[12] πᾶσα ψυχὴ αὐτόζως ἐστίν.
[13] See *PT* IV, 3 on the first noetic-noeric triad.
[14] See *PT* IV, 18.
[15] See *PT* IV, 19, on the second noetic-noeric triad.

273.9–15 refers to the third triad of the noetic-noeric realm, a realm defined by shape (such as the straight line of procession or circle of cyclical return, 273.13–15), as presented in *Parm.* 145A4–B5. Again, soul is related to this realm insofar as it moves, both in a straight line (the mark of procession) and a circle (the motion of reversion).

273.15–16 mentions only briefly the the first triad of intellective gods, the second triad of intellective gods, and the "membrane", which comprises the noeric world. This passage concerns *Parm.* 145B6–147 B 8. This is a summary of realms following the noetic-noeric triad.

273.16–19 seems to relate the soul and the hegemonic gods, seen by Syrianus as the subject of *Parm.* 147 C 1–148 D 4, which concerns likeness and unlikeness.

273.20–26 relates to the ἀπόλυτοι gods. This section is of particular interest because Proclus refers to his Master's συγγράμματα, which, to judge from the phraseology, is most likely not a commentary on the *Timaeus*, but could perhaps refer to his *Symphonia* (see introduction, p. 4) This whole passage, therefore, constitutes further useful evidence for Syrianus' system of identification for the various segments of the Second Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*.[16]

[16] See Dillon (2009) 233–246.

SYRIANUS, *IN TIM.* FR. 17[1]

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 15.11–16.1

Ἡ μὲν οὖν τοῦ ζῴου φύσις ἐτύγχανεν οὖσα αἰώνιος, καὶ τοῦτο μὲν τῷ γενητῷ παντελῶς προσάπτειν οὐκ ἦν δυνατόν. εἰκὼ δὲ ἐπινοεῖ κινητόν τινα αἰῶνος ποιῆσαι, καὶ διακοσμῶν ἅμα οὐρανὸν ποιεῖ μένοντος αἰῶνος ἐν ἑνὶ κατ᾽ ἀριθμὸν ἰοῦσαν αἰώνιον εἰκόνα τοῦτον ὃν δὴ χρόνον ὠνομάκαμεν [*Tim.* 37D].

εἰ δὲ ὁ αἰὼν δυάδα ἐμφαίνει, κἂν πολλάκις αὐτὸ κρύπτειν σπουδάζωομεν τὸ γὰρ ἀεὶ τῷ ὄντι συνάπτεται κατὰ ταὐτὸν καὶ ἔστιν αἰὼν ὁ ἀεὶ ὤν, ἔοικεν ἔχειν τὴν μονάδα τοῦ ὄντος πρὸ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ἓν ὂν καὶ μένειν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ ἑνί, ὡς ᾤετο περὶ τούτου τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών, ἵνα καὶ αὐτὸς ἓν ᾖ πρὸ τῆς δυάδος, ἅτε τοῦ ἑνὸς μὴ ἀφιστάμενος, καὶ ἡ μὲν ἐν αὐτῷ προεμφαίνουσα τὸ πλῆθος δυὰς ἑνίζηται τῷ ἑνὶ ὄντι, ἐν ᾧ μένει ὁ αἰών, τὸ δὲ πλῆθος τῶν νοητῶν αὐτῷ τῷ αἰῶνι περιέχοντι αὐτῶν καὶ συνέχοντι πάσας ἐξῃρημένως καὶ ἑνιαίως τὰς ἀκρότητας· ὅτι γὰρ ἡ τοῦ ὄντος ἑνὸς καὶ ἡ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἔννοια διαφέρουσι, δῆλον· τὸ γὰρ ἀεὶ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἁπλῶς εἶναι πάντως ἕτερον· εἴ τι γοῦν ἀεί ἐστι, τοῦτο καὶ ἔστιν· οὐκ ἀνάπαλιν δὲ εἴ τι ἔστι, τοῦτο καὶ ἀεί ἐστιν· ὁλικώτερον ἄρα καὶ γενικώτερον τοῦ ἀεὶ εἶναι τὸ εἶναι καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἐγγυτέρω τοῦ πάντων αἰτίου καὶ τῶν ὄντων καὶ τῶν ἑνάδων τῶν ἐν τοῖς οὖσι καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς γενέσεως καὶ τῆς ὕλης. τρία οὖν ταῦτά ἐστιν ἑξῆς· τὸ ἓν ὂν ὡς μονὰς τῶν ὄντων, ὁ αἰὼν ὡς δυὰς μετὰ τοῦ εἶναι τὸ ἀεὶ ἔχουσα, τὸ αἰώνιον μετέχον καὶ τοῦ εἶναι καὶ τοῦ ἀεὶ καὶ οὐ τὸ πρώτως ἀεὶ ὂν ὡς αἰών. καὶ τὸ μὲν ἓν ὂν τοῦ εἶναι μόνως αἴτιον πᾶσι τοῖς ὁπωσοῦν|[a] εἴτε ὄντως εἴτε οὐκ ὄντως, ὁ δὲ αἰὼν τῆς ἐν τῷ εἶναι διαμονῆς.

---

[a] ⟨**οὖσιν**⟩ sensui sufficit QD ς.

[1] Festugière (1968) 32, attributes 14.19–29 to Syrianus, citing Diehl, *app crit* and the *Addenda* of Diehl (1906) 504. The phrase "τῷ θεολογικωτάτῳ τῶν ἐξηγητῶν", however, seems to refer not to Syrianus, who is generally "our Teacher" or "my Master", but to Iamblichus. The content of the discussion, moreover, seems to concern a secondary One distinct from the first principle, which would certainly be an Iamblichean concept. The main point is that the first view is that Eternity rests in the *One*, whereas for Syrianus, it rests in the One-Being, summit of the noetic world.

But inasmuch as the nature of the Living Creature was eternal, this quality it was impossible to attach in its entirety to what is generated; wherefore He planned to make a moveable image of Eternity, and, as He set in order the Heaven, of that Eternity which abides in unity He made an eternal image, moving according to number, even that which we have named Time.

If Eternity reveals a duality, even though we often strive to conceal this (for the "always" is linked co-ordinately with "being" and *aiôn* is that which "always" is), so if that is the case, it would seem to have the monad of being prior to it and the One-Being, and that it is this "One" in which it is remaining, as indeed our teacher thought in reference to this One, in order that it itself should be a one prior to the dyad, inasmuch as it does not depart from the One. The duality which manifests its multiplicity in it in an anticipatory way is united to the One-Being in which Eternity remains, while the multiplicity of intelligibles are united to Eternity which holds together all of their summits transcendently and unitarily. That the concepts of the One-Being and Eternity differ, after all, is obvious: the concepts of eternal existence and of simple existence are certainly different. At any rate, if something exists eternally, this thing also exists; but conversely, if something exists, it is not the case that it always exists. Existence is a more universal and generic concept than eternal existence and for this reason it is nearer to the cause of all, both of true beings and of henads in the realm of true being, and of generation and of matter. So then there are these three entities in order: the One-Being as the monad of beings: Eternity as a dyad, containing eternity along with being; and the eternal, which participates in being and the eternal and is not the primal eternal being as is Eternity. And the One-Being is the cause of simple existence to all things which exist in any way, either real or unreal; while Eternity is the cause only of their remaining in existence.

Commentary

Here is a discussion of Eternity and its metaphysical place in the Syrianic cosmos. Syrianus proposes the etymological explanation that Eternity is the duality of "always" and "being" (ἀεί + ὄν). Prior to *aiôn* are, more immediately, One-Being (the product of *peras* and *apeiria*) and, at a higher rank, One. *Aiôn* is better understood as one aspect of One-Being: hence, at the level of One-Being there is a triad of *to hen on, aei*, and *to aiônion*, the first participant of Eternity (15.29–31). Lines 15.19–21 and 16.1 offer the puzzling description of Eternity as 'Eternity which remains in the one.' For Iamblichus, the "one" in which eternity remains is the Good (sc. the One). Syrianus, however, seems to argue that Eternity remains, rather, in One-Being as the summit of the intelligible realm. In this way, Syrianus makes use of the Iamblichean development that the lowest element of one cosmic level is the highest of the one following it; still, *aiôn* is distinct and secondary to One-Being.

It is perhaps helpful to compare Syrianus' system here with that of Iamblichus, as the two are similar but deviate in slight ways. For Iamblichus, the One presides over the dyad of Limit and Unlimitedness, followed by the product of Limit and Unlimitedness, the *henômenon* or "Unified." In the Syrianic cosmos, the One-Being is also the product of the Limit and Unlimitedness, as the summit of the noetic world. Syrianus' one qualification is that the henads are the contents of the *henômenon*.

Lines 15.24–28: Being is a more general and more generic category than eternal being, in so far as it is nearer to the cause of all things.[2]

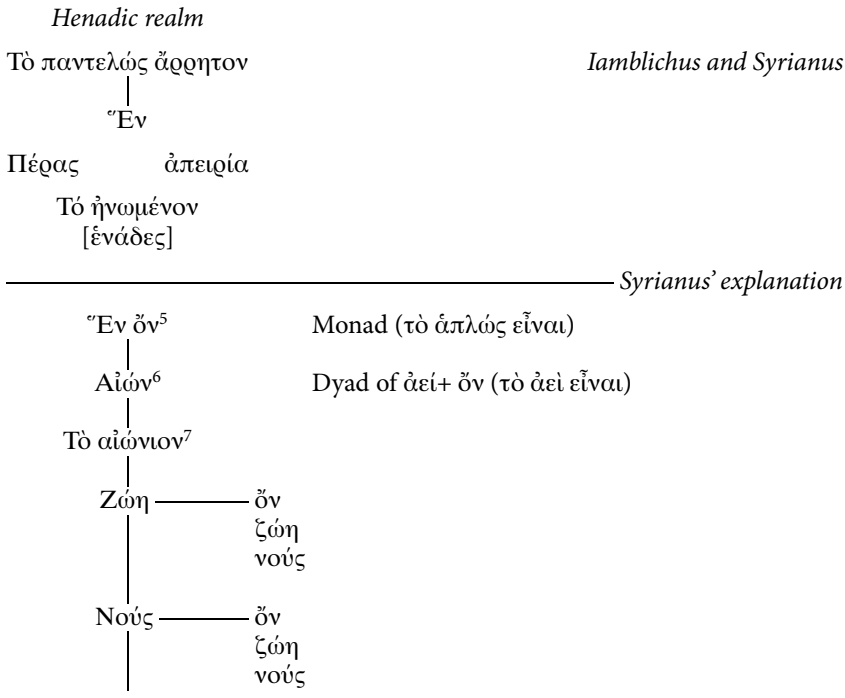
Lines 15.19–22: τὸ δε πλῆθος τῶν αὐτῷ τῷ αἰῶνι περιέχοντι αὐτῶν καὶ συνέχοντι πάσας: the dyad in Eternity gives an anticipatory image of multiplicity. *Aiōn* contains the summit of forms—the monads of the forms, which are in beings and act as archetypes of beings—but is not mixed with them. In other words, it relates to them without them relating to it, and thus preserves its own unity while embracing their multiplicity.[3]

[2] Proclus, *ET*, prop. 57: lines 25ff.: "For if it is a cause, it is more perfect and more powerful than its consequent. And if so, it must cause a greater number of effects: for greater power produces more effects, equal power, equal effects, and less power, fewer." Translation Dodds (1963).

[3] See Opsomer (2000b) 365. That Eternity holds an image of the forms is also evident in so far as the paradigmatic Model participates in Eternity: in terms of the three intelligible triads, the One and One-Being exist in the first triad, Eternity in the second, and the αὐτοζῷον (the paradigmatic Model) in the third.

Iamblichus, on the other hand, argues that forms are not in the One-Being, but monads of forms are in the One-Being.[4] In this system, Iamblichus' henads are objects of intellect transferred as contents of the *hen on*—they are still *noêtoi*, but *noêtoi* in the intelligible realm.

Lines 15.8–15 and 16.1 ff.: Directly preceding and following Syrianus' discussion, Proclus gives the opinion of the Peripatetic philosopher Strato of Lampsacus, who says that the eternal is joined to αἰών. This is of interest mainly because it is unusual that Proclus (or possibly Syrianus) was able to make a reference to Strato, the materialist leader of the Aristotelian school in the third century BC.



[4] Iamblichus, *In Philebum*, Dillon fr. 4 (Damascius, *In Philebum* 105, pp. 49–51 West): "Not even in the second realm is there separation properly so called. For the creation of distinct forms is a function of Intelligence in the first place, and the first Intelligence is the Pure Intelligence; for which reason Iamblichus declares that on this level one may place the monads of the Forms, meaning by 'monads' the undifferentiated element in each. Wherefore it is the object of intellection for the intellective realm, and the cause of Being for the Forms, even as the second element is the cause of Life in the intellective realm, and the third the cause of their creation as Forms." Trans. Dillon (1973).

[5] The One-that-is is the cause of the existence of beings.

Proclus' doctrine of Eternity places eternity in the second triad of the intelligible realm, suitable to eternity's dyadic character, as it likewise is dyadic.[8] As with Syrianus, Eternity remains in the "One" of the first intelligible realm, *to hen on*, and precedes Intellect—residing in the third intelligible triad—in a causal way. Thus, Proclus says that eternity is substantially Being through participation and Intellect, in a causal way.[9]

[6] Cause of existence as a whole—it unites intelligibles. Eternity unites the intelligible henads. Proclus, *In Tim.* II, 15, pp. 13–15. In *In Tim.* II, 12–22, 12 ff., Proclus says, "What else would eternity be but the one embracing principle of the intelligible henads and of the summit of their multitude (by henads I mean the forms of the intelligible creatures and the classes of all these intelligible forms); also the one cause of the unchangeable duration of them, not existing on the levels of the many intelligibles, nor assembled therefrom, but present to them transcendently, of itself arranging and as it were shaping them, and effecting this by their simultaneous totality." Trans. O'Neil (1962).

[7] Participates Being and everlastingness.

[8] See O'Neil (1962) 162–164.

[9] Proclus, *ET* prop. 65. See also Proclus, *In Tim.* II, p. 14, 11–15; *PT* III, p. 57, note 11 (p. 133).

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 35.25–36.33

Ἡμέρας γὰρ καὶ νύκτας καὶ μῆνας καὶ ἐνιαυτούς, οὐκ ὄντας πρὶν οὐρανὸν γενέσθαι, τότε ἅμα ἐκείνῳ συνισταμένῳ τὴν γένεσιν αὐτῶν μηχανᾶται. ταῦτα δὲ πάντα μέρη χρόνου, καὶ τό τε ἦν καὶ ἔσται χρόνου γεγονότα εἴδη [*Tim.* 37 DE].

ἔστι τοίνυν, ὡς ὁ ἡμέτερος ἐφιλοσόφει πατήρ, οὐκ ἐπ᾽ ἀναιρέσει τῶν φαινομένων˙λεγέτω γὰρ καὶ ταῦτα ὁ Τίμαιος, ἃ καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς εἴωθε λέγεσθαι, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπὶ τὰς κυριωτέρας ὑποστάσεις καὶ ταῦτα ἀνάγων, ὥσπερ εἰώθει ποιεῖν, ἡμέρα μὲν καὶ νὺξ μέτρα τοῦ χρόνου δημιουργικά, πᾶσαν διεγείροντα καὶ συνελίσσοντα τήν τε ἐμφανῆ ζωὴν καὶ τὴν ἀφανῆ ζωήν τε καὶ κίνησιν καὶ διακόσμησιν τῆς ἀπλανοῦς· ταῦτα γὰρ καὶ μόριά ἐστιν ἀληθινὰ τοῦ χρόνου καὶ πᾶσι κατὰ ταὐτὸν πάρεστι, καὶ τῆς φαινομένης ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς τὴν πρωτουργὸν αἰτίαν προείληφεν ἄλλης οὔσης ἐν τῷ ἐμφανεῖ χρόνῳ τούτων ἑκατέρας, εἰς ἣν καὶ ὁ Τίμαιος ὁρῶν ὑπομιμνήσκει, πῶς ἅμα τῷ οὐρανῷ γέγονε χρόνος, διὸ καὶ πληθυντικῶς εἶπεν ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτας, ὡς καὶ μῆνας καὶ ἐνιαυτούς. ταῦτα δὴ τὰ πρόχειρα πᾶσιν· αἱ γὰρ ἀφανεῖς τούτων αἰτίαι μονοειδεῖς εἰσι πρὸ τῶν πεπληθυσμένων καὶ ἐπ᾽ ἄπειρον ἀνακυκλουμένων, καὶ ἀκίνητοι προϋπάρχουσι τῶν κινουμένων καὶ νοεραὶ πρὸ τῶν αἰσθητῶν. ἡμέρα μὲν οὖν καὶ νὺξ ἡ πρωτίστη νοείσθω τοιάδε τις ἑκατέρα. μὴν δὲ τὸ τὴν σεληνιακὴν σφαῖραν καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἀποτελεύτησιν τῆς θατέρου περιφορᾶς συνελίσσον, θεῖον ὡς ἀληθῶς χρονικὸν μέτρον.

For simultaneously with the construction of the Heaven He contrived the production of days and nights and months and years, which existed not before the Heaven came into being. And these are all portions of Time; even as "Was" and "Shall be" are generated forms of Time

Let us then, in accordance with the theories of our Master,[1] not for the purpose of denying the phenomena of the heavens (let us accept that Timaeus used this terminology also in the way that the many are accustomed to do) but referring these terms to higher levels of being, declare as he was accustomed[2] to do, that "day" and "night" are creative measures of time, stirring up and rolling together both the manifest life and invisible life, and the movement and ordering of the sphere of the fixed stars.[3] For these (sc. night and day) are true parts of time and are present to all things (in the same way) and contain within themselves the primordial cause of the visible day and night, each of these being something different at the level of visible time, and it is with reference to this that Timaeus makes mention of how time came into being simultaneously with the heavens, for which reason he talked of days and nights in the plural, as also he did of months and years; for these are entities familiar to all. The invisible causes of these, on the other hand, are unitary and prior to their multiple products, involved as they are in endless cycles, and exist as motionless prior to what is in motion and intellective as prior to the sensible. So "day" and "night", then, in the most primal sense may be taken to be such as this. As for the "month", it is that which binds together the sphere of the moon and the whole completion of the circle of the Other, in truth a divine measure of time.

---

[1] Proclus uses the imperfect tense, possibly showing that a commentary on this passage was delivered in the form of a lecture by Syrianus.

[2] Use of the imperfect occurs again.

[3] Usually τό ἀπλάνες refers to the sphere of the fixed stars.

ἐνιαυτὸς δὲ τὸ τὴν μέσην ὅλην δημιουργίαν τελειοῦν καὶ συνέχον, καθ' ἣν καὶ ὁ ἥλιος ὁρᾶται τὸ μέγιστον ἔχων κράτος καὶ πάντα σὺν τῷ χρόνῳ μετρῶν· οὔτε γὰρ ἡμέρα ἢ νὺξ ἄνευ ἡλίου οὔτε μὴν οὔτε πολλῷ πλέον ἐνιαυτὸς οὔτ' ἄλλο τι τῶν περικοσμίων μέτρον οὐδέν.

καὶ οὐ λέγω κατὰ τὴν ἐμφανῆ μόνον δημιουργίαν˙τούτων γὰρ τῶν μέτρων καὶ ὁ φαινόμενος ἥλιος αἴτιος', ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀφανῆ καὶ ἐπαναβεβηκυῖαν ὁ ἀληθέστερος ἥλιος συμμετρεῖ τῷ χρόνῳ τὰ πάντα, χρόνου χρόνος ὢν ἀτεχνῶς κατὰ τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ τῶν θεῶν ὁμφήν· ὅτι γὰρ καὶ Πλάτων οὐ τὰ φαινόμενα ταῦτα μόνον οἶδεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ θεῖα, οἷς ταῦτα ὁμώνυμα, δηλοῖ τὰ ἐν τῷ δεκάτῳ τῶν Νόμων [899 A B]· δείξας γὰρ μεστὰ πάντα θεῶν ἐπήγαγεν, ὅτι καὶ Ὥρας ἄρα καὶ Μῆνας θεῖα ἐροῦμεν οὕτως, ὡς ἔχοντα θείας ζωὰς ἐφεστώσας καὶ νόας θείους, οὓς καὶ τὸ πᾶν. εἰ δὲ νῦν μᾶλλον λέγει περὶ τῶν φαινομένων, οὐ θαυμαστόν, διότι φυσιολογεῖν πρόκειται νῦν. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἔστω μόρια χρόνου, ὧν τὰ μὲν ᾠκείωται τοῖς ἀπλανέσι, τὰ δὲ τοῖς περὶ τοὺς πόλους τοῦ λοξοῦ στρεφομένοις, τὰ δὲ ἄλλοις θεοῖς ἢ θεῶν ὁπαδοῖς ἢ ζῴοις θνητοῖς ἢ ἀθανάτοις ἢ μερίσι τοῦ παντὸς ὑψηλοτέραις ἢ χαμαιζηλοτέραις.

Lastly, the "year" is that which brings to completion and holds together the whole median level of creation in accordance with which the sun is seen as that which possesses the greatest power and measures all things along with time. For, neither day nor night can exist without the sun, nor yet the month, nor, even more so, the year, nor any other of the measures of the cosmic circuits.

I do not speak in relation to visible creation only (for of these measures even the visible sun is a cause) but it is in relation to the invisible and more ultimate [creation], the more true sun measures all things in time, being the "time of Time" atemporally according to the oracle of the gods concerning this. That Plato did not know not only these visible things, but also the divine, of which these [visible things] are homonyms, is apparent from the tenth book of the *Laws* (899 AB). For he advanced the argument, after having shown that everything is full of gods, that we can call both seasons and months divinities, as being and presiding over divine lives and divine intellect, which is the universe. For if Plato now speaks of physical phenomena, there is nothing marvellous in this, since it is now his purpose to discuss physics. Let these things, then, be the 'parts of Time', of which some are appropriate to the fixed stars, others to those rotating around the poles of the ecliptic, and others to other gods, or to the followers of gods, or to living things mortal or immortal, or to the parts of the universe, whether more elevated or more base.

Commentary

The lemma here concerns the question of what is meant by day and night and seasons and months and whether they are parts of time. As Iamblichus had argued before him,[4] time is here seen as a thing, not just a measure of motion; it is a mode of existence and its divisions are creative forces.[5] Day and Night are the operative parts of time and function as both archetypes and the creative forces of physical days and nights.

Lines 35.27–28 provide a nice observation on Syrianic exegetical method. Proclus says that Timaeus generally uses the terms "day" and "night" in the sense in which they are usually taken, i.e., as physical phenomena. Syrianus keeps this obvious literal meaning, but adds to it a higher meaning—this method is typical of Syrianus. Proclus, moreover, contrasts Syrianus with the "majority" (οἱ πόλλοι) who are led astray towards the commoner, rather than more accurate meaning.

In lines 35.25–36.3 Syrianus postulates the form of day and night as the transcendent paradigms of Day and Night in the soul. He differentiates these from physical day and night, which are its products, not parts of time. They are true parts of time, present to all things in the same way even if they are participated in partially. In this way, Day and Night are in the fabric of time. This appears to be a development of Iamblichus' transcendent time as distinct from eternity in the soul.[6] The innovation on Syrianus' part is in making days and nights the contents of transcendent Time.

---

[4] Iamblichus condemns the Aristotelian definition of time as motion. Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 62 Dillon (Simpl., *In Phys*. I 702, 20 *CAG*): "Iamblichus, in the eighth book of his *Commentaries on the Timaeus*, contributed the following arguments on the subject:

'If every motion is in time, many motions arise simultaneously. But the parts of time are different at different times. Motion takes place in relation to something static, but Time has no need of Rest. To motion there is opposed either (another) Motion or Rest, to general Motion general Motion (or Rest), to particular particular, but to Time there is nothing opposed.'"

[5] On the partlessness of Eternity, see Sorabji (1983) 111–114; Plotinus *Enn*. III.7.6.

[6] Iamblichus, *In Tim*. frs. 62–68 Dillon distinguishes Time from Eternity. In fragment 68, Iamblichus places Eternity in the noetic sphere and time as the median between Eternity and Heaven. Time, thus, comes into being with the heavens and acts as an image of Eternity. Proclus states the distinction between Time and Eternity in terms of their participants in *ET* prop. 53: "Prior to all things eternal there exists Eternity; and prior to all things temporal, Time." Thus, things with soul participate in Time or true Day and Night, while living things participate in Time.

"ἅμα τῷ οὐρανῷ γέγονε χρόνος" (36.3–4) (*Tim.* 37 D): Syrianus posits that a transcendent Time was formed at the same time as the heaven and is thus a real hypostasis.[7] This phrase also concerned Iamblichus, who appears to give it a similar interpretation. Simplicius cites the following as coming from book VII of Iamblichus' *Commentary on the Timaeus*:

> "Its essence in activity we regard as the same as this setting in order which goes forth and is united with its creations and is unseparated from the things brought to completion by it. For the phrase 'simultaneously with the construction of the Heaven he makes…' signifies this, that the coming into existence of Time is conjoined with the setting in order which goes forth from the Demiurge…"[8]

As archetypes of physical day and night, Day and Night are the actual creative forces (δημιουργικά) and contain the primordial causes (πρωτουργὸι αἰτίαι) which cause time to divide itself, creating physical day and night. This point is likewise made by Iamblichus: "We too agree that there is an order of Time, not however an order which is ordered, but one which orders…".[9]

That Day and Night are transcendent principles in time is further stressed by Syrianus discussing them in the singular (36.9–10). As unseen, singular entities they stand prior to and generate the endless cycle of days and nights. Day and Night as forms (intellectual entities) preexist what is in motion. The analogue of Day and Night, furthermore, is Month and Year, both of which function as archetypes when they are used in the singular (36.10–17). Month is the summation of the cycle of the moon and brings to completion the circle of the Same. Year is connected to the sun, which measures all things together with Time. It brings to completion the median creation (μέση δημιουργία). This median creation refers to the heavenly bodies as genera; the highest creation is the generic forms and the lowest are the physical bodies.

The last section, 36.17–36.33, elaborates on this, making seasons and months divinities, and showing how the sun and fixed stars measure time through the rotations which are visible and apparent. Proclus discusses

---

[7] Dillon explains Iamblichus' interpretation of this phrase: "[Iamblichus] lays stress on its creation *simulteanously* with the heavens… Time proceeds not ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς κινήσεως ἢ ζωῆς but ἀπὸ τη. It is not a subjective phenomenon, but a real hypostasis." (1973) 40.

[8] Simpl., *In Phys.* I 793, 23 *CAG*; Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 63 Dillon, translation Dillon (1973).

[9] Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 63 Dillon, translation Dillon (1973).

this visible division of time in III. 53.6–55.7 in light of the second creation of the Demiurge (marked by visibility and multiplicity). He says that the first creation formed Time in its essence—itself eternal and a monad—and the second created the time which participates in the first—it is visible and multiple. The time of the second creation divides the power of the supramundane time and grants cycles to the sun, moon, and stars.[10]

[10] Iamblichus distinguishes between higher and lower time: he posits an unparticipated universal, the participated universal which it generates, and the particular which it participates. See Proclus, *ET* prop. 23–24; 100; *In Tim.* II, 105.15–28; 240.4 ff.; 313.19–24. See also Sorabji's discussion in (1983) 32.

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 108.5–108.28

Εἰσὶ δὲ δὴ τέτταρες, μία μὲν οὐρανίων θεῶν γένος, ἄλλη δὲ πτηνὸν καὶ ἀεροπόρον, τρίτη δὲ ἔνυδρον εἶδος, πεζὸν δὲ καὶ χερσαῖον τέταρτον [*Tim.* 39E–40A].

τοιαύτης δὲ τῆς τῶν ἐξηγησαμένων διαφορᾶς οὔσης θαυμάζομεν μὲν τὸν φιλοθεάμονα τῶν πραγμάτων, πειρώμεθα δὲ ἕπεσθαι τῷ ἡμετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι καί φαμεν τὸ μὲν οὐράνιον τῶν θεῶν γένος πάντων εἶναι περιληπτικὸν τῶν οὐρανίων γενῶν εἴτε θείων εἴτε ἀγγελικῶν εἴτε δαιμον⟨ί⟩ων,[a] τὸ δὲ ἀεροπόρον πάντων τῶν ὁπωσοῦν ἐν ἀέρι τεταγμένων εἴτε θεῶν τῶν τὸν ἀέρα κληρωσαμένων εἴτε δαιμόνων ἑπομένων τούτοις εἴτε ζῴων θνητῶν ἐν ἀέρι διαιτωμένων, τὸ δὲ ἔνυδρον πάντων τῶν διαλαχόντων τὸ ὕδωρ γενῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν ὕδατι τρεφομένων, τὸ δὲ πεζὸν τῶν τὴν γῆν κατανειμαμένων καὶ ἐν γῇ συνισταμένων τε καὶ φυομένων ζῴων·

ὅ τε γὰρ δημιουργὸς ἅπαξ ἁπάντων ἐστὶν αἴτιος τῶν ἐγκοσμίων εἰδῶν καὶ κοινὸς πάντων πατήρ, τὰ μὲν θεῖα γένη καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια παρ' ἑαυτοῦ μόνου καὶ δι' ἑαυτοῦ γεννῶν, τὰ δὲ θνητὰ τοῖς νέοις παραδιδοὺς θεοῖς [42 D], ὡς ἐκείνων προσεχῶς αὐτὰ γεννᾶν δυναμένων, καὶ τὸ παράδειγμα οὐ τινῶν μέν ἐστι ζῴων αἴτιον, τινῶν δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ πάντων ἔχει τὰς ὁλικωτάτας αἰτίας· καὶ γὰρ αὖ καὶ εἰ τῶν μὲν θείων γενῶν αἴτιον εἴη καὶ τῶν δαιμονίων, τῶν δὲ θνητῶν μηδαμῶς, οὐκέτι τῶν θνητῶν μὴ γενομένων οὐρανὸς ⟨π⟩α⟨ν⟩τελής, ὡς τὰ πάντα γένη τῶν ζῴων οὐκ ἔχων· ἔστι γὰρ ὅμοιος τῷ παραδείγματι καὶ παντελής, τὰς τέτταρας ἰδέας τοῦ αὐτοζῴου μιμησάμενος.

[a] **δαιμόνων** Q ς : **δαιμονικῶν** D: em s

And these Forms are four,—one of the heavenly kind of gods; another the winged kind which traverses the air; thirdly, the class which inhabits the waters; and fourthly, that which goes on foot on dry land.

Such being the difference among the exegetes, we pay due reverence to the connoisseur of metaphysical reality,[1] but we will venture to follow our Teacher and say that the heavenly race of gods embraces all the celestial classes, whether divine or angelic or daemonic, while in that class which goes through the air he wants to include all these entities in any way assigned to the air, whether gods which are allotted to the air—or the daemons following upon them, or the mortal beings that spend their time in the air; the "watery" combines all those classes of being which have been assigned the water and are nourished in water,[2] and the footed class comprises those beings which roam upon the earth and which are established and grow in the earth.

For the Demiurge is the cause alike of all forms of beings within the cosmos and he is the common father of all things, generating the divine classes and the daemons from himself alone and through himself, while "the mortal classes he hands over to the young gods" (*Tim*. 42 D) on the grounds that they are able to create these things in the immediate sense. And the Paradigm is not the cause of some living things and not others, but it contains the most general causes of all. For after all, if the Paradigm were the cause of the divine classes, and of the daemonic, but not of mortals, then if mortals had not come into being, the heaven would not yet be complete (42 D), inasmuch as it would not have all the classes of living things. For it is like its Paradigm and complete in as much as it imitates the four forms present in the Essential Living Being.

[1] Φιλοθεάμονα is a slightly sarcastic term from the *Republic* (476ab) which possibly refers to Theodore of Asine here.

[2] Such as fish.

Commentary

Interpreters of the four classes of being in *Tim.* 39E–40A[3] take issue with Plato's listing birds and fish before men, while to describe an order from gods to men with no intermediary would be an abrupt move. Later Platonists felt there should be some mention of an intermediary class between gods and men and often interpreted the categories of inhabitants of air and water as referring to the daemonic classes of being. Syrianus' major innovation here is that he places all the races—gods, daemons and souls—within each of the higher cosmic levels. This practice, moreover, is noteworthy as it seems in accord with his custom of placing different manifestations of the same god at each level of the universe.

Prior to the stated opinion of Syrianus, Proclus gives us three accounts of interpretations of *Tim.* 39 E (107.26–108.5):

1. οἳ μὲν: (107.28): The first group gives a literal interpretation of the middle categories, claiming that they are birds and fish. This group says that the Platonic text moves "εἰς θεοὺς καὶ τὰ θνητὰ γένη".
2. οἳ δὲ: (107.30): This second group refers to a more sophisticated class of intermediaries: "εἰς θεοὺς καὶ τὰ κρείττονα ἡμῶν γένη πρὸς τὰ πράγματα ἀποβλέποντες." This perhaps refers to the Iamblichean stance, as "τὰ κρείττονα ἡμῶν γένη" appears elsewhere attributed to Iamblichus.[4] The superior class pre-exists mortals, as the Demiurge was said to have made this intermediary class before mortals (107.32). Iamblichus did not identify the third hypothesis of the *Parmenides* with Soul, but declared that it concerned the *kreittona genē*, that is "angels, daemons, and heroes."
3. οἵ δὲ(108.1 ff.): The final group combines the first two positions and creates a hierarchy, whereby gods have subsistence in the heavens; daemons in the air; demi-gods in the water; and men and living things on the earth. This hierarchy is connected to *Epinomis*

[3] Plato's four forms are as follows: "the heavenly kinds of gods; the winged kind that traverses the air, the class which inhabits the waters, and that which goes on foot on dry land." *Tim.* 39 E, trans. Bury (1929).

[4] Iamblichus, *In Parm.* fr. 2 Dillon, on references of hypotheses: τὴν δε τρίτην οὐκ ἔτι περὶ ψυχῆς, ὡς οἱ πρὸ αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν κρειττόνων ἡμῶν γενῶν, ἀγγέλων, δαιμόνων ἡρώων.

> 984 B[5] on the four types of being between fire and earth: this makes the middle three classes intermediate between the heavenly gods and man. Syrianus uses the passage from the *Epinomis* on the four types of being, which he superimposes upon the *Timaeus*, but interprets it with the understanding that Plato proceeds in order from gods to men. A series of Middle Platonic philosophers likewise interpreted the *Epinomis* and *Timaeus* together, describing the inhabitants of the various orders, each of which contained different kinds of being.[6]

Syrianus, following a penchant for combining pre-existing opinions, derives a system of two intermediaries. As with group one, he includes the literal interpretation so that the ranks include birds and fish, but with the second group, he reads the text allegorically, so that the ranks include gods, daemons and mortals. Syrianus differs from the third group, which also combines the first two methods of interpretation in a similar way, in so far as he includes various genres in each rank. His system is as follows:

1. among divine classes, he includes gods, angels, and daemons
2. in the air, there exist some gods, daemons, and birds
3. at the watery level, there exist spirits proper to water and fish
4. on land, however, there are only mortal creatures—animals, plants and humans.

As with group two (Iamblichus?), Syrianus argues that the Demiurge takes care of the divine classes, but the young gods fashion the mortals, as they are the more immediate generators of those. This system serves

[5] *Epinomis* (984 B): "Well then, for the present let us attempt so much in treating of the gods, as to try—after observing the two living creatures visible to us, of which we call one immortal, and the other, all earthy, a mortal creation—to tell of the three middle things of the five, which come most evidently, according to the probable opinion, between those two." Translation Lamb (1927).

[6] In the first century BC, Philo listed the inhabitants of the air and water, starting with gods and ending with men. He said that intermediate entities should be higher than those in earth, lower than gods (*de Gigantibus* 6–9). The primary argument for him was that no part of the world should be without a share in soul. See Dillon and Winston (1983). Alcinous (*Didask*. 15) says, "There are, furthermore, other divinities, the daemons, whom one could also term 'created gods,' present in each of the elements, some of them visible, others invisible, in aether, fire, air and water, so that no part of the world should be without a share in soul or in a living being superior to mortal nature. To their administration the whole sublunar and supercelestial sphere has been assigned." Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism*, translation and commentary by Dillon (1993). See also Apuleius, *de Deo Socratis* (6–12) and Calcidius, *In Tim*. (139–146) on the four classes of being and *Tim*. 49 D 6 and *Epin*. 984 BC.

as a precursor to Proclus' cosmos in *Platonic Theology* VI, where Proclus borrows Syrianus' system whereby the same god exists, but in a different manifestation, at each cosmological level.

With this hierarchy, Syrianus thus criticizes transcendental predecessors because they do not give a thought to humbler entities, such as fish. Iamblichus, for one, argues that birds and fish are proper to earth. The debate between Syrianus and his predecessors can further be traced to their opinions about the Paradigm. For Syrianus, the only way the universe can be παντελής is for it to imitate all the classes of being in the essential Being—the divine, daemonic, and mortal class of beings (108.24ff.).

In line 108.24, Syrianus first mentions that the Demiurge is the primal cause of all being, but that the young gods are the immediate creators. Next, he discusses how the Paradigm, which the Demiurge uses in his creation, contains the causes of all the classes of being. Syrianus here connects the αὐτοζῷον—identified with the third intelligible triad as the Paradigmatic Model—with the four primordial species which are contained in it, based on an exegesis of 30 C 7–8 and 39 C 7–40 A 2.[7] The four classes of being exist in the tetradic αὐτοζῷον as an archetype, proceeding vertically to each level of the universe.[8] The ideas of the levels of gods and the four classes are connected quite clearly in *Platonic Theology* III.19, where Proclus interprets the four classes as a monad followed by a triad, each related to levels of gods: 1) celestial gods; 2) air wandering class: connected to uniform and generative gods; 3) aquatic: gods that are suppliers of motion; 4) earth: generative gods.

[7] See Proclus, *PT* III,19 and *In Parm.* VII, 1174.31–35. Cf. Opsomer (2000) 370.

[8] Intellect establishes the forms in itself: Syrianus, *In Metaph.* 106.31–34; Intellect embraces the forms: Proclus, *In Parm.* 818.37–38. See Gersh (1978) 86. Regarding archetype of class, see Proclus, *PT* III, p. 96, 21–99, ch. 23 and Opsomer (2000) 371.

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 154.16–156.3

Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων δαιμόνων εἰπεῖν καὶ γνῶναι τὴν γένεσιν μεῖζον ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς [*Tim.* 40 D].

ἐπανελθόντες δὲ εἰς τὴν προρρηθεῖσαν ζήτησιν λέγωμεν περὶ τῶν γενεσιουργῶν θεῶν τούτων, ὑπὲρ ὧν ὁ λόγος, τί δήποτε δαίμονας ἐν τούτοις ἄρα τοῖς ῥήμασι προσωνόμασεν.

ὁ μὲν οὖν Θεόδωρος ἄλλον τρόπον ταῦτα μεταχειριζόμενος δαίμονας μὲν ὡς ἐν σχέσει, θεοὺς δὲ αὐτοὺς ὡς ἀσχέτους καλεῖσθαί φησιν, ὡς ἐν τοῖς ὑπὸ σελήνην τάττων αὐτοὺς μέρεσι τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου ἄλλους ἄλλως ψυχώσαντας τὸ πᾶν.

ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμὼν πρῶτον ἠξίου δαίμονας αὐτοὺς ἀκούειν ὡς πρὸς θεοὺς τοὺς οὐρανίους· ἐκείνων γὰρ ἐξήρτηνται καὶ μετ' ἐκείνων προνοοῦσι τῶν οἰκείων κλήρων. καὶ ἔστιν ἡ διάταξις αὕτη Πλατωνική· καὶ γὰρ ἐν Συμποσίῳ [202 E 203 BC] δαίμονα τὸν Ἔρωτα προσείρηκεν ὡς ὀπαδὸν τῆς Ἀφροδίτης καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ Πόρου θεοῦ ὡς ἀληθῶς ὄντος προεληλυθότα, καίτοι γε ἐν Φαίδρῳ [242 D] θεὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι τιθέμενος ὡς πρὸς τὴν ἀναγομένην ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ζωήν. ἔπειτα κατ' ἄλλην ἐπιβολὴν εἶναι μὲν καὶ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανίοις δαίμονας καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὑπὸ σελήνην θεούς, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ μὲν τὸ γένος ἅπαν καλεῖσθαι θεούς, διὸ καὶ τὴν ἰδέαν τῶν οὐρανίων θεῶν ἐκάλει [39 E] γένος, καίτοι καὶ δαιμόνων κατ' ἐκείνην παραγομένων, ἐνταῦθα δὲ πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος δαίμονας, ἐκεῖ μὲν τῆς θείας, ἐνταῦθα δὲ τῆς δαιμονίας κρατούσης ἰδιότητος, εἰς ἣν τινες καὶ μόνην ἀποβλέψαντες διεῖλον τό τε θεῖον καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον κατά τε τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γένεσιν, δέον ἐν ἀμφοῖν μὲν ἅμφω τάττειν, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ μὲν πλεονάζειν τὸ θεῖον, ἐνταῦθα δὲ τὸ δαιμόνιον, εἶναι δὲ κἀνταῦθα τὸ θεῖον·

εἰ γὰρ ὅλος ὁ κόσμος θεὸς εὐδαίμων ἐστίν [34 B], οὐδέν ἐστι τῶν συμπληρούντων αὐτὸν μορίων ἄθεον καὶ ἀπρονόητον. εἰ δὲ καὶ θεοῦ πάντα μετέχει καὶ προνοίας, θείαν ἔλαχε φύσιν. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, καὶ οἰκεῖαι

Concerning the other divinities, to discover and declare their origin is too great a task for us

[Going back to the previous subject of inquiry, let us say about these gods in charge of generation which are the subject of the discussion here, why on earth he has termed them *daimones* in this passage.

Theodorus takes a different approach to this. They are called *daimones*, he says, as being in relation, but gods as being unrelated to what is below them, ranking them in the parts of the whole cosmos below the moon, as ensouling the universe in different ways in each case.]

On the other hand, our Teacher first of all deemed it fitting to understand them as *daimones* in distinction from the heavenly gods, for they are dependent upon them, and it is in conjunction with them that they exercise providence over their own allotments. This arrangement is Platonic. For, after all, in the *Symposium* [202 E, 203 BC] he calls Eros a daemon, as being a follower of Aphrodite and as proceeding from Resource who is truly a god, although in the *Phaedrus* [242 D] he postulates that he is a god, with regard to the life brought forth by him. Then, starting from another angle, he says that there are both daemons in the heavenly realm and gods in the realm beneath the moon, but in the former realm the whole class of them is called "gods", wherefore also he called the formal grouping of the heavenly gods a "class" (39 E) although daemons are there also envisaged under that heading, but in the latter realm the whole group is called *daimones*, since there it is the divine characteristic which prevails, whereas here it is the daemonic, an exclusive concentration on which has led certain critics to divide the divine and the daemonic along the lines of the heavenly and the generated realms, whereas in fact one should rank both in both areas and say that the divine prevails there, the daemonic here, but the divine is present in this realm also.

For if the whole universe is a "happy god" [34 B], there is none of the parts which compose this god that are devoid of divinity and providence. But if all partake in god and providence, they have been assigned a divine

τάξεις θεῶν ἐφεστήκασιν αὐτοῖς· εἰ γὰρ καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς διὰ μέσων ψυχῶν καὶ νόων μετέχει τῆς μιᾶς ψυχῆς καὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς νοῦ, τί χρὴ περὶ τούτων οἴεσθαι τῶν στοιχείων; πῶς οὐ πολλῷ μᾶλλον ταῦτα διὰ δή τινων μέσων θείων τάξεων μετείληχε τῆς μιᾶς τοῦ κόσμου θεότητος;

ἔτι δὲ κἀκεῖνο ἄτοπον, τὸ τὴν μὲν τελεστικὴν καὶ χρηστήρια καὶ ἀγάλματα θεῶν ἱδρῦσθαι ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ διά τινων συμβόλων ἐπιτήδεια ποιεῖν τὰ ἐκ μερικῆς ὕλης γενόμενα καὶ φθαρτῆς εἰς τὸ μετέχειν θεοῦ καὶ κινεῖσθαι παρ' αὐτοῦ καὶ προλέγειν τὸ μέλλον, τὸν δὲ τῶν ὅλων δημιουργὸν μὴ ἐπιστῆσαι τοῖς ὅλοις στοιχείοις ἀφθάρτοις οὖσι τοῦ κόσμου πληρώμασι ψυχὰς θείας καὶ νόας καὶ θεούς· πότερον γὰρ οὐ βούλεται; καὶ πῶς οὐ βούλεται, πάντα ἑαυτῷ παραπλήσια ποιῆσαι βουλόμενος; ἀλλ' ἀδυνατεῖ; καὶ τί τὸ ἐμποδίζον; ὁρῶμεν γὰρ τοῦτο δυνατὸν ἐκ τῶν τῆς τελεστικῆς ἔργων. εἰ δὲ καὶ βούλεται καὶ δύναται, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ ὑπέστησε θεοὺς τῆς γενέσεως ἐφόρους λήξεις τε κεκληρωμένας.[a] ἐπειδὴ δὲ πανταχοῦ τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων γένος ὁπαδόν ἐστι τῶν θεῶν, εἰσὶ καὶ γενεσιουργοὶ δαίμονες, οἳ μὲν ὅλων στοιχείων ἐπάρχοντες, οἳ δὲ κλιμάτων φύλακες, οἳ δὲ ἐθνῶν ἄρχοντες, οἳ δὲ πόλεων, οἳ δέ τινων γενῶν, οἳ δὲ καὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα ἔφοροι· κάτεισι γὰρ ἡ φρουρὰ τῶν δαιμόνων εἰς τὸν ἔσχατον μερισμόν. τοῦτο μὲν οὖν ἓν πρόβλημα περὶ ὧν μέλλει λέγειν ἐζητήσθω.

[a] **ἐκκεκληρωμένας** D: **κεκληρουμένους** ci s | latet fort. sub **ἐκ-** cod. D **ἐκ⟨εῖ⟩**

nature. And if this is the case, then designated orders of gods preside over them; for if the heavens partake through the medium of souls and intellects of the One Soul and One Intellect, what should we think about these elements? How would these not far more partake in the single divinity of the cosmos through the agency of intermediate divine orders.

And this also would be strange, that the art of theurgy, and oracles and statues of gods are established on the earth, and through the application of certain symbols should be made receptive, formed as they are from particular and corruptible material, and made capable of participating in god and being moved by him and foretelling the future, whereas the creator of all should not place in control of the elements as a whole, which are indestructible components of the cosmos, divine intellects, souls and gods. Is it that he did not wish to? And how would he not wish to, since he wishes to make all things like unto himself [*Tim.* 29 E]? Or is he perhaps unable to? But what is stopping him? For we see it is possible from the works of theurgy. So if he is willing and able, it is plain that he established gods as overseers of generation, with areas of interest allotted to them. But since everywhere the class of daemons is in the service of the gods, there are also daemons in charge of generation, some of whom preside over whole elements, others which are guardians of regions, others again are rulers of nations, others of cities, others of clans or whatever, and others are overseers of individuals; For the guardian role of the daemons descends to the lowest realm of specificity. So, let that be our discussion about one problem concerning what he is going to say.

Commentary

Syrianus discusses the relationship between gods and daemons with respect to why Plato calls gods *daimones* in *Tim.* 40 D 6. While Plato (and earlier thinkers, such as Homer) did not find the categorisation of gods as *daimones* problematic, later Platonists thought daemons were different entities altogether. We have a basic Syrianic principle at work in this passage, namely that the whole world is full of gods.

Before hearing Syrianus' opinion, we learn Theodorus of Asine's interpretation of the nature of *daimones* (154.19–23): Theodore labels *daimones* those beings which are subordinate to other gods, but still calls *daimones* gods, in so far as they are free from relation to what is below them. Here we see the Platonic distinction between levels of an entity or hypostasis, particularly the Platonic rule that lower ranks are related to higher, but higher ranks do not participate in lower.

In his discussion of the divine qualities of daemons, Syrianus first looks to a difficulty within the Platonic corpus: in the *Symposium* (202 D 9; 203 B 3), Eros proceeds from Poros as a daemon, but in the *Phaedrus* (242 D), Eros is a source of life and is viewed as a god. In the paragraphs which follow, Syrianus shows how the daemons are distinct from and related to the heavenly gods. They are distinct, in that they preside over generation; but related, because along with gods they exercise providential care over their own allotments—with this in mind, Syrianic metaphysics seem to call for mention of subordinate gods before daemons.

Lines 154. 32 ff. offer "another view-point". Here, Syrianus discusses the placement of gods and daemons within the cosmos. Unlike Middle Platonic predecessors, he argues that gods should not be confined to the heavenly realm and daemons to the sublunar realm. While, generally speaking, gods are above the moon and daemons below, both entities are in both places as well. This is not to say that Platonists making such a distinction are entirely wrong: while gods and daemons inhabit both regions, god is the more dominant characteristic of the heavenly realm and daemon of the sublunar realm. The sublunar realm remains the place of genesis, the trait which defines it as daemonic.[1]

Syrianus also makes clear that, just because daemons and gods share a cosmic place, they are not of equal status. In lines 155.11–12 ff., he says that in order to possess a divine nature something must first par-

[1] Cf. Iambl. *DM.* I 8.

ticipate in the divine—a notion which relies upon a subordinate being or class of beings partaking in a higher divine realm. It is important to Syrianus, however, that the divine display *pronoia* to everything dependent upon it, so that the entire world is a god and all the parts of the world are divine. This is an attack against Aristotelians who denied providence to the sublunar realm.[2] Again, we see the Syrianic principle that the gods are everywhere tempered by the belief that a distinction continues to exist between gods and dependent beings. Proclus discusses the differences between gods and daemons, with respect to Plato calling them both gods in *In Tim.* 166.5–167.31, as part of a more general discussion on angels, daemons, and heroes. At *In Tim.* 165.25, daemonic races are said to proceed according to the universal providence of the Demiurge. Each race of daemon, moreover, is suspended from its own class of god, so that generator gods suspend generator daemons (166.5 ff.). The entire generator class, although divine, remains subservient to the gods which give participation to it as sublunar beings (167.27 f.).

Lines 155.13–18 emphasize (somewhat convolutedly) the point that inhabitants of the heavenly realm are gods and daemons. Syrianus draws the analogy that if the heavens relate to the hypostases of Soul and Intellect, which are outside the heavens, then the heavens should relate even more properly to the World Soul, to which it has an internal relationship. As a single organism, the cosmos inter-relates everything and deifies all through sublunar divinities.

The reason why Syrianus specifies that generator gods are daemons, unlike Proclus, who makes his discourse about the relationship between gods and daemons, is most likely that Syrianus is attempting what he considers a literal reading of *Tim.* 40 D. Generator gods were discussed by Iamblichus as part of a triadic succession of entities occuring in *In Sophistam* fr. 1 Dillon. Here, the sublunary, genesiurgic demiurge takes third place after the Father of demiurges and the heavenly demiurges. Iamblichus calls this demiurge creator of the sublunar world of genesis, from which depend the γενεσιουργοὶ θεόι, or daemons, who administer a tertiary providence (*In Soph.* 1, 14).

[2] See Atticus, fr. 3, 799A where Atticus attacks Aristotle, arguing against Aristotle's claim that God exercises no intervention in the world, des Places (1977) fr. 3 (bis) Alexander Aphr. *Quaestio* 21, ap. *Suppl. Arist* II 2 1892, p. 69, 7–10 Bruns. See Merlan (1969) 89–91, where Merlan compares the theology of Aristotle with that of Epicurus.

The last section (155.18ff.) uses the analogy of the theurgist—if a theurgist can ensoul a statue, surely the god can ensoul the various cosmic elements. These lines accept Syrianus' belief in theurgy. If his premise here is "if a theurgist can ensoul a statue", it is assumed that it is a non-controversial subject for him.

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 174.13–176.7

Γῆς τε καὶ Οὐρανοῦ παῖδες Ὠκεανὸς καὶ Τηθὺς ἐγενέσθην [*Tim.* 40 E].

ταῦτα δὲ εἰδὼς ἡγοῦμαι δεῖν ὥσπερ ἀσφαλοῦς πείσματος ἔχεσθαι τῆς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν παραδόσεως· διὰ γὰρ ταύτης τὰ μὲν πλημμελῆ τῶν δοξασμάτων φευξόμεθα, ταῖς δὲ καθαρωτάταις ἐννοίαις Ἰαμβλίχου συνεψόμεθα. πρῶτον οὖν ὑπομνήσομεν ἡμᾶς αὐτούς, ὅτι περὶ τῶν ὑπὸ σελήνην θεῶν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὅτι πανταχοῦ πάντες καὶ ὅτι κατ' ἀναλογίαν προεληλύθασι τῶν νοητῶν καὶ νοερῶν βασιλέων. ἔπειθ' οὕτωσὶ τούτοις πιστεύοντες λέγομεν, ὅτι καθάπερ ὁ πρώτιστος οὐρανὸς τῶν νοερῶν θεῶν ὅρος ἐστὶ καὶ συνοχεὺς τὸ μέτρον ἔκ τ' αὐτοῦ ⟨τἀγαθοῦ⟩ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν θεῶν[a] εἰς τοὺς νοεροὺς διακόσμους ἦκον συνέχων, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ οὗτος ὁ οὐρανὸς ὅρος ἐστὶ τῶν γενεσιουργῶν θεῶν καὶ συνοχεὺς τὸ μέτρον τὸ δημιουργικὸν καὶ τὸ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανίων θεῶν προελθὸν εἰς τοὺς τὴν γένεσιν λαχόντας συνέχων ἐν ἑνὶ πέρατι καὶ συνάπτων αὐτοὺς πρὸς τὴν οὐράνιον ἡγεμονίαν τῶν θεῶν· ἀνὰ λόγον γὰρ ὡς ὁ δημιουργὸς πρὸς αὐτὸ τἀγαθόν, οὕτως ἡ μία τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τοῦδε θεότης πρὸς τὸν νοερὸν οὐρανόν. ὥσπερ οὖν ἐκεῖ τὸ μέτρον καὶ τὸ πέρας ἐκ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἐφήκει διὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πᾶσι τοῖς νοεροῖς, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἐνταῦθα τοῖς γενεσιουργοῖς θεοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς κρείττοσι γένεσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀκρότητος τῶν ἐγκοσμίων ὁ ὅρος ἐφήκει, λέγω δὴ τῆς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τοῦδε συνοχικῆς μεσότητος· ταύτην γὰρ ἔλαχε τὴν τάξιν ὁ πανταχοῦ προϊὼν οὐρανός, ὅπου μὲν ἡνωμένως καὶ κρυφίως, ὅπου δὲ ἐκφανῶς καὶ διῃρημένως[b]· ὅπου μὲν γὰρ ψυχαῖς ἐπιφέρει τὸν ὅρον, ὅπου δὲ τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις, ὅπου δὲ ἄλλως ἄλλοις, καὶ ἐν ἀέρι μὲν πρώτως, ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἐνυδρίοις τάξεσι δευτέρως, ἐν δὲ τῇ γῇ καὶ τοῖς χθονίοις ἔργοις ἐσχάτως. εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ συμπλοκαὶ τούτων· ἄλλο γὰρ τὸ θείως ἐν ἀέρι καὶ τὸ δαιμονίως [καὶ] ἐπὶ γῆς· ὅπου μὲν γὰρ ὁ τρόπος ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν διαφόροις τάξεσιν,

[a] **ὅρος–θεῶν** om D [b] **ὅπου μὲν–διῃρημένως** om D

Of Gê and Uranus were born the children of Oceanus and Tethys

While realising this, I believe it is necessary to cling as to a safe cable [*Laws* X 893 B] to the account given by our Master; for through this teaching we will avoid the errors of false opinion, and we will follow the purest insights of Iamblichus. First, let us remind ourselves that the discussion concerns the gods beneath the moon, and that all are everywhere and that they have proceeded forth according to the analogy of the intelligible and intellectual kings.[1] Thus, trusting in these, we say that even as the primal heaven is the boundary and the maintainer of the intellectual gods which holds together the measure which proceeds from the Good itself and from the intelligible gods to the intellective orders, in the same way this heaven too is the boundary and maintainer of the generative gods, holding together within a single limit the demiurgic measure which proceeds from the heavenly gods to those allotted the realm of generation, and linking them to the heavenly rule of the gods. For the same analogy obtains between the Demiurge and the Good itself, and between the single divinity of this heaven in relation to the intellectual heaven. Even as, therefore, measure and limit proceed from the Good through heaven to all the intellectual beings, so here too the boundary extends to the generative gods, and to the higher classes of being from the Demiurge and from the summit of the encosmic realm, by which I mean the connective median of this heaven. For this is the role that has been assigned to heaven, to proceed in all directions, in some cases unitarily and secretly, in others manifestly and dividedly. For it imposes a bound in one case to souls, in another to the works of nature, in still other ways to other things; and primally in the air, to a secondary extent to the watery orders, and at the lowest level to the earth and earthly productions. And there are links between these: for it is a different thing to exist in a divine but demonic mode in the air, and on the earth. In the

[1] These gods would seem to refer to the triad of Kronos, Rhea, and Zeus.

ὅπου δὲ ὁ τρόπος ἕτερος ἐπὶ μιᾶς λήξεως. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν περὶ τῆς οὐρανοῦ δυνάμεως.

Ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν γῆν μετὰ τοῦτον τραπόμενοι καὶ παρακαλέσαντες αὐτὴν συνεφάψασθαι τῶν περὶ αὐτῆς λόγων ἡμῖν πάλιν ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης αὐτῆς ἐκφάνσεως τὸν περὶ αὐτῆς ὅρον ἀποδῶμεν. ἐκείνη μὲν οὖν ἐν ταῖς μέσαις τριάσιν ἐκφανεῖσα τῶν νοερῶν θεῶν ἅμα οὐρανῷ τῷ συνοχεῖ τῶν ὅλων νοερῶν θεῶν ἀνὰ λόγον τε πρόεισι πρὸς τὴν νοητὴν γῆν, ἣν καὶ πρωτίστην εὑρίσκομεν τῶν νοερῶν[a] τριάδων, καὶ ὡς ἐν ζῳογόνοις τάξεσιν ἀφομοιοῦται πρὸς τὴν ἀπειρίαν τὴν πρώτην, ἔστι δὲ ὁ ἐκδόχιος κόλπος τῆς οὐρανοῦ γεννητικῆς θεότητος καὶ τὸ μέσον κέντρον τῆς ἐκείνου πατρικῆς ἀγαθότητος, συμβασιλεύουσα αὐτῷ καὶ οὖσα δύναμις αὐτοῦ πατρὸς ὄντος. ἡ δὲ ἀνὰ λόγον αὐτῇ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὑπὸ σελήνην προϊσταμένη γῆ οἷον δύναμίς ἐστι γόνιμος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, τὴν πατρικὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁριστικὴν καὶ μετρητικὴν καὶ συνοχικὴν πρόνοιαν ἐκφαίνουσα, καὶ γονίμοις ἐπὶ πάντα διατείνουσα ⟨δυνάμεσιν⟩, αὐτὴ τὴν ἀπειρίαν πᾶσαν τῶν ὑπὸ σελήνην ἀπογεννῶσα, ὥσπερ ὁ οὐρανὸς τὴν τοῦ πέρατος συστοιχίαν, ὁ τὸν ὅρον καὶ τὸ πέρας ἐπιφέρων τοῖς δευτέροις. ὁ μὲν οὖν ὅρος οὗτος καὶ τὸ πέρας ἀφορίζει τὴν ὕπαρξιν ἑκάστου, καθ' ἣν καὶ δαίμονες καὶ θεοὶ καὶ ψυχαὶ καὶ σώματα συνέχεται, καὶ ἑνοποιεῖ τὰ μιμούμενα τὴν μίαν ἑνάδα τῶν ὅλων. ἡ δὲ ἀπειρία πολλαπλασιάζει τὰς ἑκάστων δυνάμεις· πολὺ γὰρ τὸ πέρας ἐν ἅπασι τοῖς ὑπὸ σελήνην, πολὺ δὲ καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον διά τε θεοῦ καὶ τῶν μετὰ θεοὺς διατεῖνον⟦τα⟧ πάντων.

[a] **νοερῶν**: **νοητῶν** ci t

one case, the mode [of being] is the same in different classes, but in the other, it is different in the same class. So much, then, for the heavenly power.

Turning to Earth after this, and after having called upon it to accord with us in these discussions, let us define on the basis of this first manifestation its definition. That entity, then, being manifested in the middle triads of the intellective gods at the same time as the Heaven which is the maintainer of all the divine intellects, proceeds analogously with the intelligible Gē, which we discover to be first of the intellective triads, and at the level of the zoōgonic classes, it is assimilated to the primal Unlimitedness. It is the 'receiving bosom' of the generative deity of heaven and the center-point of that paternal goodness, ruling with it and being a power of it, it being the Father. But the earth which stands forth analogously to it in the realm below the moon, is, as it were, a fecundative power of Heaven, revealing its paternal and defining and preservative providential care, and extending to all things with its generative powers, produces all the Unlimitedness in the realm below the moon, just as the heaven produces the column of Limit, imposing bound and limit upon secondary things. Therefore, this boundary and limit determine the existence of each thing, in accordance with which (both) daemons and gods and souls and bodies are held together, and it unifies these, as they imitate the single henad of the universe. Unlimitedness, on the other hand, multiplies the powers of each thing; for there is much Limit in all sublunar things, and much Unlimitedness also, extending through both God and all things after the gods.

Commentary

This fragment concerns the nature of Ouranos and Gē and does not touch upon the second half of the lemma, on Okeanos and Tethys, which Proclus discusses in 177.23–181.6. In the discussion, Syrianus concerns himself first with Ouranos as the Limit of the planetary gods, and then with Gē, as representing the force of Unlimitedness (*apeiria*).

While Proclus credits Syrianus with the "purest opinions of Iamblichus", his interpretation on the face of it is somewhat at odds with that of Iamblichus, whose explanation encompassed Gē and Ouranos as forces proper to encosmic gods. Iamblichus talks of Ge as "τὸ μόνιμον πᾶν καὶ σταθερὸν" (173.17–18) in the encosmic gods. Prior to the opinions of any named philosophers, Proclus outlines the interpretations of eight un-named exegetes. Their interpretations of Gē include the material and immaterial (173.8–12):

1. οἱ μέν: understand Gē as solid earth;
2. οἱ δέ: the earth represents matter, as the foundation for beings;
3. οἱ δέ: Gē represents intelligible matter;
4. οἱ δέ: it represents the power of intellect;
5. οἱ δέ: Life;
6. οἱ δέ: an incorporeal form inseparable from earth;
7. οἱ δέ: Soul;
8. οἱ δέ: Intellect

The following eight interpretations are given for Ouranos (173.12 ff.). It is assumed that the eight interpreters of Gē correlate to those of Ouranos, although oddly enough they are not given in the same order:

1. οἱ μέν: understand Ouranos as the visible heaven;
2. οἱ δέ: the movement around the centre;
3. οἱ δέ: the power which proceeds in accord with this movement;
4. οἱ δέ: the possessor of Intellect;
5. οἱ δέ: the pure and separated Intellect;
6. οἱ δέ: the nature of the celestial revolution;
7. οἱ δέ: Soul;
8. οἱ δέ: Intellect.

While these interpretations vary from a material to an intelligible understanding of Gē and Ouranos, beginning with Iamblichus, and after him, Gē and Ouranos took on the meaning of two principles, working in tandem at the intelligible level. For Iamblichus (173.17), Gē represents

aspects of permanency in the encosmic gods (this stable element being analogous to earth), while Ouranos refers to the total demiurgic activity, which acts as the limit of the entire universe.[2] Earth and heaven thus function as the stable and active elements—two extremes—for the encosmic gods. Next, Proclus gives the opinion of Theodorus (173.24), who holds to the ancient opinion linking Gē with matter, but, along with Iamblichus, makes heaven a boundary, in this case an intellect which divides the lowest level from the first. Theodore's proposal here is terribly complex, as he links Gē and Ouranos to two powers that relate to the soul of the universe (and, in turn, a triad of powers particular to the soul of the universe).[3] Proclus dismisses this opinion, favoring that of Iamblichus, which he modifies so that Gē and Ouranos, while representing two extreme forces in the universe, indicate *peras* and *apeiria*, both in the intellective and in the sublunary realm (176.1 ff.).

The view of Syrianus given here represents a nice link between Iamblichus and Proclus, although Syrianus' opinion is focused primarily on the sublunar gods (174.18: οἱ ὑπὸ σελήνην). These sublunar gods have proceeded from the intelligible and intellectual kings (174.20: νοήτοι καὶ νοέροι βασιλεῖς), who seem to refer to the triad of Kronos, Rhea, and Zeus that guide the intellectual triad of ὄν, ζωή, νοῦς. Next, Syrianus draws an analogy between the primal heaven (174.21) (or noetic heaven) as the container of the intellectual gods and "this heaven", which contains the encosmic gods. The Demiurge, as the single divinity of this heaven, keeps the ranks of the cosmos together. The connective boundary (ὅρος) between the generative gods and superior gods comes from the Demiurge, at the summit of this heaven (174.25). The summit of the encosmic world is, thus, the connective mean of this heaven. In this way, the ἀκρότης of one realm is the lowest element of the previous realm. In the last section (175.5 ff.), Syrianus shows how the same *tropos* occurs in different *taxeis*.

[2] Iamblichus, *In Tim.*, fr. 75 Dillon: "I know, indeed, that the divine Iamblichus understands 'Earth' as that which encompasses all that is permanent and steadfast in the substance of the encosmic gods and in their activity and in their eternal revolution, and which encompasses the greater powers and universal life-principles, and 'Heaven' as the creative activity proceeding from the demiurge, which is whole and perfect and full of its own powers, and which subsists around the Demiurge as being a limit for itself and for the universe."

[3] See Festiugère (1968) 30, note 3 on Theodore and his Amelian triads.

After Iamblichus, the interpretation of heaven and earth rest on Gē and Ouranos being dyadic forces which act as extremes of the universe. For Iamblichus, in an opinion not adopted by Proclus, heaven represented the activity of the Demiurge. Syrianus moves the discussion from the encosmic to the planetary realm. The opinions of Iamblichus and Syrianus manifest themselves in Procline thought in *In Tim.* 171.21 ff. In his argument at the beginning of the discussion on the lemma, Proclus says that earth and heaven function as two causes, with earth as mother and heaven as father, from which all beings spring (171.24 ff.). Proclus, hence, treats earth and heaven not just as two bodies encompassing others or marking boundaries, but as causative principles. His interpretation becomes more metaphysically complex towards the end of the discussion (176.10–11), where he says heaven and earth act as two which precede the dyad of Okeanos and Tethys. This is noteworthy as Syrianus' *peras* and *apeiria* function as two preceding the dyad which comprises the rest of the universe.

As for Gē, she represents the element of Unlimitedness in the cosmos that is responsible for the multiplicity of individual entities, and the limitless productivity of the sublunary realm. Here we may note a difference between Syrianus and Iamblichus, since Iamblichus chose to emphasise rather the permanence attributed to the idea of earth.

It is notable that, at this point, Proclus himself seems to take over the expositions, but it is inevitable that Syrianus also presented his view of Gē, with which Proclus would have no dispute, so I feel justified in including at least the present passage. The influence of Syrianus may, of course, continue much further.

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 203.32–204.32

Θεοὶ θεῶν [*Tim.* 41 A].

εἰ δὲ μηδὲν τῶν εἰρημένων ἀντιλαμβάνεται τῆς Πλατωνικῆς ἐννοίας, τί ποτε αὐτὸ δηλοῦν ῥητέον; κάλλιον δὴ καὶ ἐνταῦθα πρὸς τὴν τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν διάνοιαν ἀνατρέχειν. λέγει δὲ αὖτη τοὺς ἐγκοσμίους πάντας θεοὺς οὐχ ἁπλῶς εἶναι θεούς, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο μεθεκτοὺς θεούς[a]· ἔστι γὰρ ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ μέν τι χωριστὸν καὶ ἀφανὲς καὶ ὑπερκόσμιον, τὸ δὲ ἐμφανὲς ἄγαλμα αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τεταγμένων. καὶ πρώτως μέν ἐστι θεὸς τὸ ἀφανὲς αὐτῶν· νοείσθω γὰρ δὴ νῦν ὡς ἀδιαίρετον καὶ ἕν, δευτέρως δὲ τὸ ὄχημα τοῦτο τὸ ἐξηρτημένον τῆς ἀφανοῦς ἐν αὐτοῖς οὐσίας· εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἐφ' ἡμῶν διττὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὃ μὲν ἐντὸς κατὰ τὴν ψυχήν, ὃ δὲ φαινόμενος ὃν ὁρῶμεν, πόσῳ μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀμφότερα ῥητέον καὶ τὸν θεὸν διττόν, τὸν μὲν ἀφανῆ, τὸν δὲ φαινόμενον;

τούτων δὲ οὕτως ἐχόντων τὸ ⌜θεοὶ θεῶν⌝ ῥητέον πρὸς ἅπαντας λέγεσθαι τοὺς ἐγκοσμίους, ἐν οἷς συμπλοκή τίς ἐστι τῶν ἀφανῶν θεῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἐμφανεῖς· μεθεκτοὶ γάρ εἰσιν. ὅλως δὲ διττῶν διακόσμων ὑπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ παραγομένων, τῶν μὲν ὑπερκοσμίων, τῶν δὲ ἐγκοσμίων καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀμεθέκτων ὄντων, τῶν δὲ μεθεκτῶν, εἰ μὲν πρὸς τοὺς ὑπερκοσμίους διελέγετο νῦν, εἶπεν ἂν πρὸς αὐτοὺς θεοὶ μόνον· εἰσὶ γὰρ ἀμέθεκτοι καὶ χωριστοὶ καὶ ἀφανεῖς, ἐπειδὴ δὲ πρὸς ἐγκοσμίους ὁ λόγος, θεοὺς αὐτοὺς ἀποκαλεῖ θεῶν, ὡς μετεχομένους ὑπ' ἄλλων ἐμφανῶν θεῶν.

ἐν δὴ τούτοις περιλαμβάνονται καὶ οἱ δαίμονες· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ κατὰ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς τάξιν εἰσὶ θεοί, μετέχοντες ἀδιαιρέτως τῆς ἐκείνων ἰδιότητος. οὕτω τοι καὶ ἐν Φαίδρῳ [246 E] θεῶν καὶ δαιμόνων

[a] **ἀλλὰ–θεούς** om Q

But if none of the aforementioned views express the meaning of Plato, what are we to say reveals it? It is better here once again to take refuge in the opinion of our Master. This view states that all the encosmic gods are not gods in the absolute sense, but as a composite thing, participated gods. For there is in them one element that is transcendent and invisible and hypercosmic, but also another that is a manifest image of them arrayed in the cosmos.[1] And what is god in a primary sense is their invisible part (which one can understand as their unitary and invisible aspect), while the secondary aspect is this vehicle which is attached to their invisible substance. For, after all, if, in our case, man is double, the internal aspect represented by the soul and the other visible, which we see, how much more in the case of the gods are both these aspects to be reckoned, and god taken as double, the one aspect visible, the other invisible?

This being the case, the phrase "Gods of gods" must be taken to refer to all encosmic gods, in whom there is a linkage of invisible god with visible ones; for they are participated. So then, since two orders have been created by the Demiurge, one of the hypercosmic gods and another of the encosmic gods, the one being unparticipated, the other participated, if he [the Demiurge] had been speaking to the hypercosmic gods now in the present instance, he would have addressed them simply as "gods" (for they are unparticipated and transcendent and invisible), but since his address is to the encosmic gods, he calls them "gods of gods", as being participated in by other visible gods.

Among these are also included the daemons. For these, in respect of their relation to the gods, are gods, since they participate indivisibly in their characteristics. Thus, in the *Phaedrus* [246 E], when he talks of the

[1] Kroll deletes αὖ, although Festiugière prefers αὐτῶν τῶν, referring to the hypercosmic, transcendent aspect of gods. See Festiugière (1968) 63, note 1.

ἡγεμόνας εἰπὼν τοὺς δώδεκα θεοὺς ὅμως τοὺς ἑπομένους ἅπαντας θεοὺς ἀπεκάλεσεν ἐπενεγκών [247 E]· καὶ οὗτος μὲν θεῶν βίος. πάντες οὖν εἰσι ⌜θεοὶ θεῶν⌝, ὡς συμπεπλεγμένον ἔχοντες τῷ ἀφανεῖ τὸ ἐμφανὲς καὶ τῷ ὑπερκοσμίῳ τὸ ἐγκόσμιον. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν περὶ τῆς ὅλης εἰρήσθω τοῦδε τοῦ προσρήματος ἐννοίας.

Commentary

This fragment discusses the true meaning of the mysterious mode of address by the Demiurge to the young gods, "gods of gods".

It may be helpful to begin with the phrase "gods of gods", which proved controversial in late Antique Platonic thought,[2] as prior to Syrianus' opinion, Proclus gives an extensive survey of earlier exegetes of "θέοι θεῶν":

1. (202.29 ff.): Some attach "of gods" to that which follows so that the entire phrase now reads: "Gods, of which gods I am the creator" (ὧν θεῶν ἐγὼ). These exegetes Proclus dismisses on the grammatical grounds that such a phrase would merely be a repetition and altogether superfluous. This seems to be the interpretation preferred by modern commentators, such as A.E. Taylor and F.M. Cornford. While Cornford does not find it plausible that Plato would write

[2] For a review of ancient and modern scholarship on the meaning of θεὸι θεῶν, see Taylor (1928) 248–230 and Cornford (1935) 140–141; 367–370. Taylor suggests that θεῶν is an ancient corruption of ὅσων, so that the text should read: "θεοὶ ὅσων ἐγὼ δημιουργός…". Among the opinions he counters, he lists the following alternatives: 1) gods sprung from gods, as interpreted by Cicero ("*vos qui deorum satu orti estis*"). Taylor objects to this interpretation as there is nothing to suggest the genitive is a genitive of origin. 2) Gods who are θεὸι of other gods, as in the case of Zeus in 121 B 7 of the *Critias* (θεὸς ὁ θεῶν Ζεύς) who is the one being whom the other gods worship. This is the opinion Proclus attributes to his second category of exegetes (203.20 ff.). Cornford remarks that Proclus does not include this interpretation in his catalogue of ancient interpretations of 41 A. 3) Archer-Hind (1888) and Apelt (1922) suggest that θεόι θεῶν is intensive, i.e., that the gods of gods are a kind of superlative (Taylor [1928] 248–249; Cornford [1935] 368), an idea Taylor condemns because the gods in the text are being compared to the creator, to whom they are clearly not superior.

twelve gods as being "leaders of gods and daemons," he nevertheless calls all those following in their train, "gods" [247 E], when he says below, "this is the life of the gods." Therefore, all of them are "gods of gods" as having a visible element woven together with an invisible element, and an encosmic element woven in with the hypercosmic.

Let this much be said about the meaning of the mode of address in general.

θέοι θεῶν to mean "gods, of whom", he does repunctuate the text to read τὰ for ἃ, with as the subject of θεῶν ἐργῶν τε: "Gods, of gods whom I am maker and of works the father, those which…".[3] This revised form now refers to both gods and works, which comprise the whole universe. Taylor comes up with a similar explanation. He explains ἔργα ἅ by omitting the ἅ and replacing it with ἔργων:[4] the text now reads, ἔργα ὧν ἔργων ("works whereof I am maker and father, inasmuch as they are my handiwork, are indissoluble");[5]

2. (203.8 ff.): Others have said that "gods of gods" refers to encosmic gods which are copies of intelligibles, so that the entire universe is "the image of eternal gods" (37 C 6). This interpretation is interesting as it provides insight into the Platonic opinion that, in a particular way, encosmic gods are inferior to or dependent on the noetic realm. This explanation may be from Porphyry,[6] who discusses the encosmic *eikones* of the noetic world. Proclus, however, calls this interpretation incorrect, as encosmic gods do not have the exclusive right to being copies of the Intelligible—such a claim is also valid for mortal beings, who as "things of god" are copies of the Intelligible. Thus, all the gods, visible and invisible, are addressed.

---

[3] Cornford (1997) 369.

[4] Cicero, "*quorum operum ego parens effectorque sum, haec sunt indissolubilia me invito*", which Augustine cites *in De Civitate Dei* iii.16.

[5] Calcidius offers another method. He retains the ἅ, along with ἔργων and ὧν "*di deorum, quorum opifex idemque pater ego, opera siquidem vos mea*". See Taylor (1928) 249.

[6] I think it is likely to be Porphyry because this commentator is the first part of a three part sequence culminating in Syrianus, which occurs typically in Proclus' *Parmenides Commentary*.

3. (203.20ff.): Still others claim that Plato means by "gods of gods" the more universal henads of the encosmic gods. The henads here would be unificatory principles of lower gods. Proclus protests that all the encosmic gods are included among those addressed. This interpretation possibly stems from Theodore of Asine.

Syrianus in this fragment argues that when Plato says "gods of gods" he means the encosmic gods, the genitive indicating their participation in the hypercosmic gods. The encosmic gods are not called simply "gods" because they are participated in by other gods; as μέθεκτοι θεόι (204.4), the fact that they are participated in makes them a composite thing, τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο (204.4). Kroll suggests that this phrase be re-read as a genitive, τοῦ ὅλου τούτου, so that the phrase, rather than establishing the encosmic gods as a level of participated gods, instead indicates that they are participated in by the universe. Based on other uses of τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο in the *Timaeus* Commentary, Diehl's usage, which makes the μέθεκτοι θεόι into a class of gods appears appropriate.[7] This participation gives the encosmic gods a composite quality; hence they have an invisible, transcendent, unitary aspect, by which they participate in the hypercosmic gods, and a secondary, physical element, apparent in their physical manifestation as planets. By this element, Syrianus can only refer to the vehicles of the planetary gods, their fiery bodies. The vehicle is attached to the invisible essence in the encosmic god. The divine element is primarily the invisible aspect, while the visible aspect is not ἕν, but extended. Here we have a nice description of planetary gods as entities half invisible, half visible as pure fire.

In lines 204.24ff., Syrianus brings in *daimones*, whom he places in a subcategory of the encosmic gods as being "gods of gods" and being somewhere in-between the visible (ἀφανὲς) and invisible (ἐμφανές). Only the hypercosmic are purely θεοὶ. He proves this with a linguistic argument based on a reading of *Phaedrus* 246 E. Syrianus' new theory

[7] Cf. Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 125.19: "The races are in effect destroyed by the waters, which are created by the celestial revolutions and have for matter water, which is why this class [τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο]] is called "a celestial stream"." Festiugère notes that τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο is used in a way similar to III, 204.4, where he suggests τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο is the appropriate usage and that Syrianus says the μέθεκτους θεούς is a class of participatable gods (1987) 63, note 1. See also III, 90.25, where planets are described as a class with the terminology τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο: τοιαῦται αι γὰρ αἱ πλάναι τῶν οὐρανίων, ἀπλανεῖς πλάναι τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο ὑπάρξουσι καὶ αἰὶ ἐν τέλει οὖσαι καὶ πρὸς ἕν σπεύδουσαι τέλος.

here is that there are both celestial daemons and sublunar daemons. Proclus uses *daimones* and *theoi* interchangeably here, as all of them are gods of gods and mix the encosmic and hypercosmic.

SYRIANUS, *IN TIM.* FR. 23

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 236.31–237.9

Τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν ὑμεῖς ἀθανάτῳ θνητὸν προσυφαίνοντες [*Tim.* 41 CD].

μήποτε οὖν κάλλιον οὕτω λέγειν, ὥσπερ ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος, τὰς μὲν ἀκρότητας τῆς ἀλόγου ζωῆς τὸ πνεῦμα περιέχειν καὶ εἶναι ταύτας μετὰ τοῦ ὀχήματος ἀιδίους ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ παρηγμένας, ταύτας δὲ ἐκτεινομένας καὶ μεριζομένας ποιεῖν τὴν ζωὴν ταύτην, ἣν προσυφαίνουσιν οἱ νέοι θεοί, θνητὴν μὲν οὖσαν διότι τὸν μερισμὸν τοῦτον ἀποτίθεσθαί ποτε τὴν ψυχὴν ἀναγκαῖον, ὅταν ἀποκαταστῇ τυχοῦσα καθάρσεως, πολυχρονιωτέραν δὲ τῆς τοῦ σώματος τούτου ζωῆς· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ἐν Ἅιδου καὶ τοὺς βίους αἱρουμένην ἔχειν τὴν τοιαύτην ζωήν· κατὰ γὰρ αὐτὴν τὴν ῥοπὴν προσλαμβάνει τὴν θνητὴν ταύτην ζωὴν ἀπὸ τῶν νέων θεῶν.

For the rest, do you weave together the mortal with the immortal

Might it not be better to say, as does our Master, that the spirit comprises the summits of irrational life, and these are immortal along with the vehicle as being created by the Demiurge, but these when extended and divided create this life that the young gods weave on, which is on the one hand mortal because it is necessary for the soul at some stage to cast off this divided state when it attains purification and is restored (to its proper state), but on the other hand, is longer-lived than the life in this body; and it is for this reason that the soul possesses this sort of life both in Hades and when it chooses lives for itself, for it is in virtue of this tendency that it takes on this mortal life from the young gods.

Commentary

This fragment understands the weaving together of the mortal and immortal as a discussion of how the soul relates to the body. Later Platonists, Porphyry in particular, thought the mortal and immortal could not relate, but also dismissed the concept of reconstitution mentioned in 236.10, which permitted the soul to remain intact (although disunified) through periodic renewal. Instead, Platonists developed the notion of the *ochēma*, a pneumatic vehicle of the soul that related soul to body, after Plato's imagery in *Tim.* 41 E.[1] The vehicle encased the rational soul when it descended from the noetic universe and, through its purification, enabled the soul to return to the higher realm.[2] The concept appears in Aristotle[3] and Middle Platonic sources,[4] and is rather developed in the thought of Plotinus, although he never used the term *ochēma*.[5]

---

[1] *Tim.* 41 E 1–2, "And when [the Demiurge] had compounded the whole he divided it into souls equal in number to the stars, and each soul he assigned to one star, and setting them each as it were in a chariot (*ochēma*) he showed them the nature of the universe…". Trans. Bury (1929). Later Platonists understood the chariot to be the vehicle of the soul.

[2] Finamore lists these two functions, along with a third which is not addressed in this fragment: that the vehicle acts as an organ of sense-perception (1985) 1.

[3] Aristotle's *pneuma* is in some ways quite unlike the Platonic *ochēma*, in so far as it exists in the body, but in other ways it provides a good example of the early concept of the *ochēma*—for example, it acts as a carrier for the irrational soul (*GA*, 736b27 ff.). See Dodds (1963) 316.

[4] According to Dodds (1963) 316, the earliest extant passage which uses *ochēma* and *pneuma* together occurs in Galen's *de placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, p. 643 f. Müller. Origen (*adv. Celsum* II. 60, 892 A Migne) and Hippolytus (*Philosph.* 568. 14 Diels) refer to an ethereal body. Atticus and Albinus are named by Proclus (*In Tim.* 234.9–18) as speaking of the *ochēma*, although Festiugère and Dodds doubt that these writers were aware of the vehicle. According to Proclus, Atticus and Albinus say that the vehicle and the irrational soul are mortal, possessing life only κατὰ τὴν εἰς γένεσιν ῥοπὴν τῆς ψυχῆς (*In Tim.* III, 234.9–18). Dodds says that Proclus is perhaps "reading into these writers the belief in a pneumatic vehicle" (1963) 306, note 3. He explains that in the *Didaskalikos* (c. 23), Albinus speaks of the physical body as the *ochēma* of the embodied soul and the stars as the *ochēmata* of the souls without bodies. Dodds (1963) 306. The opinion of Atticus is as follows: *De Anima*, ap. Stob. § 28 379 Trans. Finamore-Dillon (2002):

"Atticus and ⟨certain other⟩ Platonists, however, do not agree with this view; they unite all souls with bodies by a single method of incorporation. Always in the same way in every embodiment of souls, they first posit an irrational, disorderly, enmattered soul and then introduce an association of the rational soul with this soul as it is being brought into order."

[5] Plotinus established that souls require a body through which means it can descend (*Enn.* IV 3. 19 ff.). He connected souls to the body through a sort of vehicle in the form of a pneumatic encasement that souls take on or off during heavenly descent or ascent

Lines 236.22 ff. contest Porphyry's position on the *ochēma*:

> "But will this be the case, what some say, that the same thing both remains intact and is dissolved through being reconstituted and because of this is at once mortal and immortal? But this suggestion is intrinsically unreasonable. When unity is destroyed how can we say that the same thing persists? For the irrational soul is not a collection of lives, but rather one single life of many forms. Furthermore, he [Plato] concedes that the heavenly bodies receive at one time diminution and at another time additions, which is completely alien to them. But are we to leave this life as destructible and scattered at the same time as the body? [*Rep*.X] If irrational soul dissolves, what about punishments, purifications, and how about the choice of lives, some in obedience to imagination, some to spirit, some to desire? And what about the entry into irrational animals? For the connection with the irrational is through the irrational Soul, even as connection to intellect is through Intellect."

Here, Proclus refutes the opinion that soul cannot be a collection of lives, an opinion we know to be Porphyry's, as it reflects the account Proclus gives in 234. 18 ff. Here, Porphyry and his followers deny the destruction of the vehicle and the irrational soul[6] by claiming instead that they are reconstituted (ἀναστοιχειοῦσαι) into their fundamental components and dissolved (ἀναλύεσθαι) into the celestial spheres which acted as their primordial homes.[7] According to Porphyry, as the rational soul enters the body, it collects from each planetary sphere an element proper to each planet. What it collects are known as garments and the sum total of these garments are the soul's vehicle—moreover, each garment collected adds to the vehicle's visibility and shape.[8] Conversely, when the body died, according to Porphyry, the garments were shed during the soul's ascent through the spheres. Porphyry explained that the vehicle was gathered from heavenly bodies during ascent. The rational soul alone—unlike the irrational soul and vehicle—avoided the cycle of gathering and ridding itself of celestial bodies. The end result of the soul's re-ascent

(*Enn*. IV.3.15.1–5). His description of the pneumatic body explains how it provided an ethereal encasement for the immortal soul, thus allowing Plotinus to explain any change in the soul's structure as that of a change in the soul's vehicle.

[6] Speusippus and Xenocrates had already posited the immortality of the irrational soul. See Olympiodorus, *In Phd*. 124.15.

[7] See Dillon's commentary on this passage (1978) 372–373. Cf. Porphyry, *de Antro Nymph*. 11; *Chaldean Oracles* p. 47; Lewy (1978) 182 n. 26; Proclus *ET* prop. 209; Plotinus *Enn*. IV.3.15 and 24.

[8] Porphyry. *de Antro Nymp*. 11; *de abst*. II 47; Origen, *adv. Celsum II*. 60 (892 A Migne).

and dismissal of celestial bodies is the soul's purification from evils and permanent union with the Father (*De Regressu Animae* fr. 11).[9] It was a wide-spread concept that the soul added successive layers to its garment during descent,[10] although Iamblichus, forever contrary to Porphyry, disagreed on that matter.

While Iamblichus accepted the concept of the vehicle, he attacked in particular Porphyry's claim that the vehicle was multiform and dissolved itself as a series of garments.[11] For Iamblichus, the vehicle was created from ether in its entirety, rather than mixtures from heavenly bodies (*In Tim*. fr. 84 Dillon), and survived as a whole—even when the soul ascended, the vehicle remained and waited to be reclaimed at the soul's inevitable descent. The soul underwent judgement, punishment and purification in the vehicle and reascended in the vehicle.[12] Both the *ochēma* and the irrational soul survived intact (i.e., do not dissolve) because they take their origins from the gods themselves (*In Tim*. fr. 81 Dillon). Iamblichus thus creates a system whereby the soul exists in different forms depending on which cosmic level it occupies. The soul first exists in a pure state at the highest, supercelestial level where it has a luminous vehicle.[13] In its next stage, the soul is brought into the cosmos and sowed among planets and stars, at which point it takes on an ethereal vehicle.[14] At the point when the soul descends into the material realm, it puts on a corporeal body.[15] The major difference between Iamblichus and his predecessors is his rejection of the theory that one level of soul remains above.

---

[9] Augustine, *Civ. Dei* x, 19; Bidez. Fr. 2, 28*3; purification of the *pneuma* conduced to the removal of φαντασία. See Smith (1974) 152. Plotinus refers to the progressive embodiment of the soul in *Enn*. IV.3.15 ff. Smith (1974) compares Plotinus' use of βάρυνσις (idea of the soul's weight forcing it down) and the concept of dragging (ἑφελκομένας) with the terminology in Porphyry, *Sent*. xxix, p. 13.7; p. 14.1; p. 14, 4; p. 15. See also *Ad Gaurum*, p. 49, 16 ff.; *de Antro Nymph*., Nauck 64, 15.

[10] The concept of the *chiton* appears in Empedocles, fr. 126 Diels, where the body is encompassed with flesh; Philo (*Leg. All*. III. 15 ff.), the irrational soul acts as *chitones* which envelop the *logikon*; Porphyry (*de abst*. II. 46), the pneumatic body is *chiton*. Dodds, 307.

[11] Proclus, *In Tim*. III, 234.18–26; Dillon (1973) 372–373; Dodds (1963) 319; Smith (1974) 66; Finamore (1985) 11.

[12] Finamore and Dillon (2002) 218.

[13] Finamore and Dillon (2002) 150.

[14] Finamore and Dillon (2002) 150.

[15] Finamore and Dillon (2002) 377.15 ff.; 150. Finamore (1985) 60–91.

In lines 236.27 ff., Proclus argues that the irrational soul cannot merely dissolve, as we know from *Republic* X that it undergoes punishments and purifications.[16] He argues, agreeing with Iamblichus,[17] that the soul uses the immortal vehicle in Hades (235.11–17). Porphyry argued that vehicle and irrational soul survived bodily death, and could thus be punished, before return to the firmament.[18]

Next, he makes an odd reference to entry into irrational animals, a phenomenon nobody seems to have accepted after Porphyry's dismissal of it.[19] Proclus is perhaps being rhetorical here, arguing that interactions require appropriate intermediaries.

Proclus arrives at the opinion of "our Master" in lines 236.32 ff. Syrianus reconciles the opinions of Porphyry—who says the vehicle dissolves—and Iamblichus—who argues that it survives—by positing a higher and lower *ochēma*.[20] Syrianus here posits two vehicles, a higher *ochēma*, which is immortal and a lower one, which dissolves. Along with Iamblichus, he held that this upper vehicle undergoes creation first. The dissolvable vehicle endures bodily death, as does Porphyry's, so that the irrational soul may undergo purification. The young gods constructed the lower vehicle, as the Demiurge cannot be held responsible for mortal material. In addition, Proclus adopts Porphyry's concept that the soul obtains layers of elements during its descent, which are later removed during its ascent to the cosmos (297.21 ff.). Proclus construes a vehicle made of different elements and three distinct envelopes: the first always exists, as it is encosmic; the second exists before the body and after it; the third, the soul exchanges once it is on earth (298.31–299.4).

[16] Iamblichus holds that the soul descends either voluntarily or involuntarily as part of its punishment.

[17] Iamblichus argues that the soul is purified after death of the body in its ethereal vehicle. See Finamore and Dillon (2002) 47–53.

[18] Dodds (1963) 307. Porphyry argues that that natural death is not the complete release of soul in *Sent.* xxix.

[19] Mentioned by Nemesius, *de Naturae Hominis*.

[20] Finamore (1985) 168–169; Dillon (1973) 319–321. Damascius, as with Syrianus and Proclus, posits a higher and lower vehicle. Damascius, *In Phd.* 2.542. Souls are punished in the lower, pneumatic vehicle, *In Phd.* 1.543, 2.146. See Finamore and Dillon (2002) 246.

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 247.26–249.26

Καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸν πρότερον κρατῆρα, ἐν ᾧ τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ψυχὴν κεραννὺς ἔμισγε, τὰ τῶν πρόσθεν ὑπόλοιπα κατεχεῖτο μίσγων [*Tim.* 41 D].

ὁ δέ γε ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών, ἄνωθεν ὥσπερ ἀπὸ σκοπιᾶς τὰ ὄντα θεώμενος καὶ ταῖς τῶν θεολόγων ὑφηγήσεσιν ἑπόμενος, ἤδη μὲν καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ πατρὶ καὶ δημιουργῷ τῶν ὅλων τὴν γόνιμον ἀπετίθετο δύναμιν, καθ' ἣν μιμούμενος τὸν νοητὸν θεὸν καὶ πατρικὴν ἔχει καὶ μητρικὴν πρὸς τοὺς ἐγκοσμίους θεοὺς αἰτίαν, αὐτὸς οὐσιοποιός, αὐτὸς ζῳογόνος, αὐτὸς εἰδοποιός.

ἐπειδὴ δὲ δεῖ καὶ διωρισμένην αἰτίαν εἶναι τῆς ψυχικῆς ζωῆς τὴν συνδημιουργοῦσαν αὐτῷ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον καὶ ἀπογεννῶσαν πᾶσαν τὴν ψυχικὴν οὐσίαν, καὶ ταύτην διὰ τοῦ κρατῆρος ἔλεγεν ἡμῖν παραδίδοσθαι. καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεολόγους, ἐν ἀπορρήτοις λέγοντας ἃ λέγουσι, γάμους τε καὶ τόκους ἐπινοεῖν θεῶν, δι' ὧν αἰνίσσονται[a] τὰς ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς τῶν ἀπογεννήσεων ὁμονοητικὰς κοινωνίας, τὸν δὲ Πλάτωνα κράσεις τε καὶ συγκράσεις διαμυθολογεῖν, τὰ μὲν γένη τοῦ ὄντος ἀντὶ τῶν σπερμάτων, τὴν δὲ μῖξιν ἀντὶ τοῦ γάμου παραλαμβάνοντα· καὶ γὰρ αἱ ψυχαὶ κατὰ μὲν τὸ ἐν αὐταῖς ὂν ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ παρήχθησαν, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ζωὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ κρατῆρος· αἰτία γάρ ἐστι

[a] **ἃ λέγουσι–αἰνίσσονται** om D

And once more into the former bowl, wherein He had blended and mixed the Soul of the Universe, He poured the residue of the previous material, mixing it

But my Master, viewing reality as from a higher vantage point[1] and following the guidance of the theologians,[2] already places in the Father and the Demiurge of the universe himself the generative power, in accord with which, in imitation of the intelligible god, he possesses both a paternal and a maternal causal relationship with the encosmic gods, he himself producing their essence, he himself the generator of their life, he himself the creator of their form.[3]

But since there had to be a particular cause of psychic life, which would assist him in creating the entire cosmos, and which generates the entire essence of soul, he said[4] that this also was transmitted to us by means of the mixing bowl. The theologians, uttering their teachings in secret formulae, postulate marriages and births of gods, through which they hint at the harmonious union of generation among the gods, whereas Plato presents us with a mythical account of mixtures and blendings, positing the genera of being instead of seeds and the mixture as answering to marriage.[5] For indeed, the souls in respect of the being inherent in them are produced by the Demiurge, while in respect of their life they are produced in the mixing bowl; for it is the vivifying cause of all truly

[1] Cf. *Rep*. IV 445 C: "'And truly', said I, 'now that we have come to this height of argument I seem to see as from a point of outlook (σκοπιά) that there is one form of excellence.'" Proclus here implicitly compares Syrianus to Socrates.

[2] Julian (Diehl, ed. 1.28); Festugière suggests that the "theologians" include *Chaldean Oracles*, (*Or.ch*. 249.12) and Orpheus (OF 249.3; Hesiod 249.16s.) based on Proclus' account in 249.12ff. It seems that in 249.12, however, that Proclus is paraphrasing Syrianus and adding these quotations for authority, so I would not attribute the Chaldean or Orphic quotations to Syrianus here.

[3] I.e., he contains within himself the triad of Being-Life-Intellect (= form).

[4] Ἐλέγεν (248.5) governs ἐπινοεῖν (248.7) and διαμυθολογεῖν (248.9).

[5] I.e., the five genera of the *Sophist* and of the *Timaeus*.

ζῳογόνος τῆς ψυχικῆς οὐσιώδους ζωῆς. ἐπειδὴ δὲ μᾶλλόν εἰσι ζωαὶ καὶ πρὸς τὴν ζῳογονικὴν ᾠκείωνται τάξιν, διὰ τοῦτο ἄρχεται μὲν ἡ μῖξις ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ, τελειοῦται δὲ ἐν τῷ κρατῆρι· πανταχόθεν γὰρ οὗτος περιέχει τὰ γένη τῶν ψυχῶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ μετὰ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ συναπογεννᾷ τὰς ψυχάς. τέτταρα οὖν ταῦτά ἐστιν, ὁ κεραννὺς ὁ κρατὴρ τὰ κιρνάμενα τὸ κρᾶμα, καὶ ὃ μὲν τὴν πατρὸς ἔχει τάξιν, ὃ δὲ τὴν γεννητικὴν καὶ ἀφοριστικὴν τοῦ εἴδους τῶν ψυχῶν, τὰ δὲ πρόεισι μὲν ἀπ' ἀμφοῖν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐκ τοῦ πατρός, τὸ δὲ εἰδοποιεῖται κατὰ τὴν γεννητικὴν αἰτίαν ἕν τι γιγνόμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ κρατῆρος.

εἰ δὲ δεῖ παραγυμνῶσαι τὴν τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν διάνοιαν, ἰστέον, ὅτι τῆς ζῳογόνου θεότητος πάσας τὰς πηγὰς ἐν ἑαυτῇ περιεχούσης τῆς[a] ζωῆς, ὅσαι τε ψυχῶν εἰσι γεννητικαὶ καὶ ὅσαι τῆς δαιμονίας τάξεως καὶ ὅσαι τὰς ἀγγελικὰς ἀποτίκτουσι σειρὰς καὶ ὅσαι τὴν φύσιν ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις παράγουσι, πρόεισί τις ἀπ' αὐτῆς μία θεότης ζῳογόνος, πηγὴ πάσης τῆς τῶν ψυχῶν προόδου καὶ ἀπογεννήσεως, ἣ καὶ τῷ δημιουργῷ συνταττομένη συνυφίστησιν αὐτῷ τὸν ψυχικὸν ὅλον διάκοσμον, πᾶσαν μὲν τὴν ὑπερκόσμιον ἀπογεννῶσα ψυχήν, πᾶσαν δὲ τὴν ἐγκόσμιον, προϊοῦσα δὲ ἐπὶ πάντα καὶ ζωοποιοῦσα καὶ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον, ἣν ὁ μὲν Ὀρφεὺς [fr. 130] ἰσοτελῆ τῷ δημιουργῷ καλεῖ καὶ συνάπτει καὶ συζεύξας μίαν ποιεῖ μητέρα πάντων ὧν ὁ Ζεὺς πατήρ, ὁ δὲ Πλάτων κρατῆρα προσείρηκεν, ὡς πηγὴν ζωῆς ψυχικῆς·

οὗτος γὰρ ὁ κρατὴρ ὑποδέχεται τὴν γεννητικὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν ψυχῶν, καὶ κατὰ τοῦτον εἰδοποιεῖται τὸ εἶδος τῶν ψυχῶν, ὅθεν καὶ κρᾶμα προσηγόρευται. ἔχει μὲν οὖν καὶ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐν αὐτῷ βασιλικὴν ψυχήν, ὥσπερ εἶπεν ὁ ἐν τῷ Φιλήβῳ [30 D] Σωκράτης, ἔχει δὲ καὶ τὴν πηγὴν ταύτην συνεργαζομένην αὐτῷ τὸν ψυχικὸν διάκοσμον. καὶ οἱ μὲν βάρβαροι τὴν ζῳογονικὴν ταύτην αἰτίαν πηγαίαν ψυχὴν ἀποκαλοῦσι μετὰ τῆς πηγαίας ἀρετῆς ἀναφανεῖσαν ἀπὸ τῶν λαγόνων τῆς ὅλης ζῳογόνου θεότητος, ἐν ᾗ περιέχονται πάσης ζωῆς πηγαί, θείας ἀγγελικῆς δαιμονίας ψυχικῆς[b] φυσικῆς. ὁ δὲ θεολόγος ὁ παρ' Ἕλλησιν [Hes. *Theog.* 453 s] Ἥραν αὐτὴν προσείρηκε μετὰ τῆς Ἑστίας ἀναφανεῖσαν ἀπὸ τῆς μεγίστης Ῥέας, ἣ περιείληφεν ἁπάσας τὰς ζῳογονικὰς δυνάμεις, ἐπὶ τέλει καὶ αὐτὴν ἀποτίκτουσα τὴν Φύσιν, εἰ καὶ συντάττει τῷ δημιουργῷ τὴν Ἥραν ὡς μητέρα πατρί, καὶ πάσης τῆς Τιτανικῆς

[a] **ζῳογόνου–τῆς** om D [b] **πάσης ζωῆς–ψυκιχῆς** om D

existent psychic life.[6] But since [the souls] are predominantly lives and assimilated to the life-giving order, on this account, the mixture originates from the Demiurge, but is brought to completion in the mixing bowl; for in every way this embraces the classes of souls in itself and, along with the Demiurge, assists in their generation. There are therefore these four: the mixer, the mixing bowl, the things being mixed, and the mixture. The first has the rank of Father, the second has the role of what is generative and definitive of the forms of souls, the things being mixed come from both of these, but more from the Father, but the mixture is given form in accordance with the generative cause, being made into one thing by the mixing bowl.

But if we must unveil the thought of our Master, one must know that, since the vivifying divinity encompasses all the sources of life in itself, both such as are generative of souls and such as are generative of the daemonic class, such as bring to birth the angelic series, and such as leads Nature down to the ultimate level, there springs from that one, a certain vivifying deity, the source of the entire procession and generation of souls, which conjoined to the Demiurge calls into existence with him the entire cosmos, generating both all the supracosmic Soul and all encosmic Soul, proceeding to all things and giving life to the entire cosmos, which Orpheus calls the 'consort' of the Demiurge, and limits it with him, and yoking them together, he makes it the unique mother of all beings of which Zeus is the Father, while Plato calls it the mixing-bowl, as being the source of all psychic life.

For this mixing bowl receives the productive activity of the Father of souls, and in accordance with that, produces the form of souls, whence it is called the mixture. Zeus, after all, has in himself 'a royal soul', just as Socrates said in the *Philebus*, but he has also that same 'fount' that produces with him the psychic cosmos. Even the barbarians (sc. Chaldaeans) call the life-producing cause the 'fountal soul' which manifests itself, along with the source of virtue, from the 'flanks' of the whole life-producing deity, in which are contained the sources of all life, divine, angelic, daemonic, psychic, and physical. But the theologian of the Greeks (sc. Hesiod) has called her Hera, appearing with Hestia from the great Rhea, who contains all the life-producing powers and she herself finally producing Nature, even if he links Hera to the Demiurge, as mother to father, and presents her as the originator of the entire Titanic

[6] Distinction between *ōn* and *zoē*.

διαιρέσεως ἔξαρχον αὐτὴν παραδίδωσι τῆς ⟦τε⟧ ἐν ψυχαῖς θεωρουμένης κατὰ τὰς μοίρας διακρίσεως αἰτίαν. ὁ δὲ Πλάτων κρατῆρα, καὶ τὸ κρᾶμα καὶ τὰς μοίρας ἀπολαμβάνων· ἐκεῖνος γὰρ αἴτιος τῆς τῶν μοιρῶν διαιρέσεως· διὸ καὶ οὐ πρότερον διαιρεῖ, πρὶν ἐν τῷ κρατῆρι τὰ γένη σπαρῇ.

Commentary

In this commentary on the mixing bowl, Syrianus explains how the mixing bowl acts as the generative cause of souls in so far as it transmits form to souls, while the Demiurge, as mixer, produces psychic life.

Before giving the opinion of Syrianus, Proclus lists the readings of Theodore of Asine, Atticus, and Iamblichus. Theodore (246.32–247.11) distinguishes two *kratēres*: the first being portions of the mixture—the Soul itself (the universal Soul),[7] the souls of the celestial gods, and our souls; the second being the mixture. Proclus condemns this interpretation because Plato only mentions one *krater* in which he mingles all souls. He finds little use for a second mixing bowl. Next-mentioned (out of chronological sequence), is Atticus (247.12–15), who, in his interpretation of the *Phaedrus*, also posited a two-fold *krater*. Proclus finds this out of character with Atticus' usual interpretations of Plato, as he tends to stick close to the text. It is interesting that Proclus next discusses Iamblichus, who said there was only one mixing bowl, and skips over Plotinus' discussion of two mixing bowls entirely.[8] Iamblichus (247.16–26) posits one mixing bowl, which comprehends all life as "one vivific cause." The penetrative *logos* pours out of the mixing bowl with directions on how to order life. He allots to each soul, depending on its *lexis*, a particular measure of connection (apparently to the mixing bowl or divine creation). Based on a passage in *In Tim.* 254.3–10, Dillon understands this as the Demiurge granting different proportions of being, sameness and otherness to divine, demonic, and individual human souls.[9] These

[7] Cf. Proclus, *In Tim.* II, 274.29; soul in universal sense.

[8] Plotinus, *Enn.* IV.8.4–36, where he mentions the products of Plato's "second" mixing bowl.

[9] Cf. Iamblichus, *In Tim.* fr. 82 Dillon; Dillon (1973) 377.

division, as cause of the division according to Fate seen in souls. But Plato calls it 'mixing bowl'—distinguishing from it the mixture and the fated portions. For that is the cause of the division of fated portions. It is on account of this that he did not make a division before he sowed the genera [of souls] into the mixing bowl.

---

are alloted an order by way of procession from the mixing bowl as they receive definitions of life. Iamblichus describes the relationship of the world soul to the individual soul by describing two mixtures, adopting the olive oil pressing imagery employed by Plato—there is a first pressing, in which the ingredients produce the World Soul, and a second pressing, in which the remnants of the first mixture produce the secondary souls.

Proclus comes to the opinion of "our Master" in lines 247.26. He situates the creative power in the "Father of all things", the title granted to the Father of the triad of demiurges. Syrianus places the γονιμή δυναμίς in the Father, here a νοερός divinity, so that this power is associated with the summit of the intelligible world. As an intellective creature, the Demiurge imitates the intelligible god and relates back to the intelligible god. The hierarchy Syrianus describes here can be outlined:

Noetic (intelligible)
Noetic-Noeric (intelligible-intellective)
Noetic: Demiurge/intellective level
|
Father of intelligibles in contact with intelligible "being"

Syrianus describes the Father as having a paternal and maternal relationship with the encosmic gods, by which he means he contains *aitia* of both—ζωή, as the maternal causality and ὄν as the paternal causality.[10] He is the maker of forms (εἰδοποιός),[11] the creator of essence

[10] There is a triad of demiurgic fathers, with the middle one actually being a mother (Rhea or Hekate). See Dillon (2000).

[11] Damascius, *In Parm* 157.6; *In Parm* 170.11; *In Parm* 174.17; *In Parm* 175.15; *In Parm* 182.3; *In Parm* 185.25; *In Parm* 193.23; *In Phil* 177.1; Proclus, *PT* IV, 11.29; *PT* V, 88.5; *In Parm* 802.32; *In Parm* 836.36; *In Parm* 897.21; *In Tim* I, 300.9; *In Tim* II, 126.12; *In Tim* III, 248.2.

(οὐσιοποιός).[12] Syrianus next lists what the Demiurge generates: he is the generator of life, essence, and form—the Platonic triad of the second hypostasis, with εἶδος standing in for νοῦς. The Demiurge transmits these qualities to soul when he causes pyschic life, in so far as he assists in creating the whole cosmos and generates the whole of psychic reality.

In line 248.5, we come to Syrianus' discussion of the mixing bowl. Syrianus compares Plato's mixing bowl image to the theologians' talk of marriages among the gods. While theologians say that marriages and births of gods[13] are a form of mixing and blendings of genres, Plato replaces the concept of births with that of the genres of being and marriage with that of mixture.[14] The mixture discussed here is the formation of souls—the mixture itself originated with the Demiurge but reaches perfection in the mixing bowl. The parts of the mixture seem to be essence and life, which relate to the mixer and mixing bowl in so far as ὄν is the Demiurge and ζωή, the mixing bowl. Because souls are more akin to ζωή than οὐσία (248.14–17), the process of the mixture of souls begins with the Demiurge and ends with the mixing bowl. The mixing bowl functions by transmitting and generating the essence of soul and is the life-giving cause of all ζωή. The mixing bowl's role in creation makes it both the life-giving cause and the life-giving element in the soul. The maternal Demiurge thus plays a greater role than the paternal, with respect to elements in the soul. Syrianus outlines the four elements of this process further in 248.19 ff.:

1. the mixer = Demiurge (Father)
2. the mixing bowl = the (female) power that is generative and definitive of form of souls
3. the things mixed (elements of soul); γενή τῶν ὄντων 35A–B: these proceed from both, although more from the Father
4. Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 24the product (soul itself): given form from the generative cause having become one thing from the action of the mixing bowl.

---

[12] First used in Hermias on the *Phaedrus*, a transcription of Syrianus' lectures, *In Platonis Phaedrum scholia* 170.1. The term is used later by Proclus and Damascius: Proclus, *PT* IV, 11.28; *In Parm* 836.35; *In Parm* 836.36; *In Parm* 939.10; *In Cra* 101.23; *In Tim* III, 248.1; *In Euc* 167.19; and Damascius, *De Princ* I, 190.25; *In Parm*. 16.12; *In Parm*. 69.18; *In Parm*. 70.4; *In Parm*. 147.1; *In Parm*. 201.24; *In Phil*. 69.5.

[13] Orph. 248.5; 176.16. See Praechter (1932) 1745.37.

[14] The allusion to the genres of being could indicate the five genres in the *Sophist*. In *PT* V, 30, p. 112, Proclus places the genres of being in the summit of the intelligibles because that is where the forms are located.

From 248.24–249.26 Proclus sets out to "clarify the thought of our Master" (εἰ δε δεῖ παραγυμνῶσαι τὴν τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν διάνοιαν), noting that Syrianus himself adduced the *Oracles* and Orpheus. He rephrases the earlier statements of Syrianus, while taking note that, in addition to generating partial souls, the mixing bowl also generates the hypercosmic order of Soul and the World Soul. By broadening the function of the mixing bowl from creating partial souls exclusively, which is how Syrianus describes its function, Proclus argues that the mixing bowl contains all life, including the World Soul. He is also explicit with reference to the kind of partial souls created by the *crater*: these include the divine, angelic and demonic classes. This passage is a nice display of Proclus' exegetical technique. It seems he paraphrases the gist of Syrianus' teaching on the topic, then re-interprets it to fit a broader category than Syrianus had initially outlined. Once he extends the category discussed, Proclus gives authority to his interpretation by citing Orpheus,[15] the Chaldeans,[16] and Hesiod.[17]

[15] *OF* 130: He calls the mixing bowl a vivific deity equal in dignity to the Demiurge.

[16] *Or. Ch.* 249.12: the mixing bowl is called the vivifying cause and the source of souls which comes from the Demiurge and contains the divine, angelic and demonic natures.

[17] *Or. Ch.* 249.3; Hes. *Theog.* 453–454 identifies the vivific cause with Juno although all these analogies are probably derived from Syrianus, who after all composed a concordance (*symphonia*) of Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato.

Proclus, *In Tim.* III. 278.9–32

Ὅτι γένεσις πρώτη μὲν ἔσοιτο τεταγμένη μία πᾶσιν, ἵνα μή τις ἐλαττοῖτο υπ᾽ αὐτοῦ [*Tim.* 41 E].

ἄλλος δὲ ἀκριβέστερος καὶ τοῦδε λόγος, ὃν ὁ ἡμέτερος διδάσκαλος παρεδίδου, πάσῃ ψυχῇ μερικῇ μίαν ἀφωρίσθαι κάθοδόν φησιν οὐχ ἁπλῶς, ἀλλὰ καθ᾽ ἑκάστην τοῦ θείου γενητοῦ περίοδον· οὐδεμίαν γὰρ ψυχὴν οὔτε τῶν ἀχράντων καλουμένων οὔτε τῶν κακύνεσθαι καὶ πλανᾶσθαι δυναμένων πᾶσαν περίοδον ἄνω μένειν εἰκός· τὸ γὰρ καθ᾽ ὅλην περίοδον μίαν ἀκλινὲς καὶ ἄτρεπτον διαμένον ἄνω οὐδὲ κατ᾽ ἄλλην ἔτι κατελθεῖν εἰς γένεσιν δυνατόν· πάντα γὰρ ἀνελιττόμενα τὰ σχήματα τοῦ παντὸς ἅπτωτον διεφύλαξεν αὐτήν· ἀεὶ δὲ τὰ αὐτὰ σχήματα πάλιν καὶ πάλιν. ἔτι δὲ ἡ ζωὴ τῆς μερικῆς ψυχῆς[a] ἐλάττων ἐστὶ τῆς περιόδου τοῦ παντός, ὥστ᾽ εἰ κατὰ πᾶσαν ταύτην ἤρκεσε πρὸς τὴν ἄνω διαμονήν, ἄτρεπτον ἔλαχε τὴν νοερὰν δύναμιν ζῇ γὰρ ὡσαύτως τὸν ὅλον χρόνον, ὥστ᾽ εἰ μηδὲν εἰς αὐτὴν καινὸν ὁ σύμπας ἔδρασε χρόνος ἐξελιττόμενος, τῶν ἀεὶ μενουσῶν ἐστιν ἐν τῷ κατὰ φύσιν.

ἀνάγκη ἄρα πᾶσαν ψυχὴν μερικὴν ἐν ἑκάστῃ περιόδῳ μίαν ποιήσασθαι κάθοδον, πλείους δὲ ἄλλας ἄλλων, πολλῷ τῷ αὐτεξουσίῳ χρησαμένας. ταύτην δὴ τὴν κάθοδον ὁ Πλάτων ⌜πρώτην γένεσιν⌝ προσείρηκε· δηλοῖ δὲ αὐτός, ὁπόταν διαλεχθεὶς περὶ τῶν μετὰ τὴν πρώτην γένεσιν λήξεων ἐπάγῃ [42 B]· σφαλεὶς δὲ τούτων εἰς γυναικὸς φύσιν ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ γενέσει μεταβάλοι. πρώτην ἄρα γένεσιν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ λέγει κάθοδον.

[a] **ψυκῆς** A: b (im): **ζωῆς** QDb

How that the first birth should be one and the same ordained for all, in order that none might be slighted by Him

But there is another account more accurate even than this, that our Master used to expound,[1] which says that for every individual soul there is one descent designated, not absolutely but in the course of each circuit of the divine creation (*Rep*. VIII 546 B 4):[2] for, it is reasonable to suppose that no soul, neither one of those termed "pure", nor any of those prone to be corrupted and sent astray, remains above during an entire revolution. For that which remains above undeviating and unchanged throughout a whole period cannot descend into generation in any other period. All the configurations[3] of the universe as they turn have preserved it unchanged, for the same constellations go round again and again. And further, the life of the individual soul is less than the circuit, so that if it lasted the entire revolution, it would have been allotted an intellectual power that is unchanging (for it would be living in an equal manner during the whole of time.) So that if the whole of time in its unrolling[4] did nothing new to it, it would be in its nature one of those things that remain always.

It is necessary, then, that every individual soul in each cosmic period make one descent, and some do more than others, making use of more free will. It is this descent that Plato calls "the first generation." He makes this clear when, concerning the allotment of lives following on the first descent, he says [42 B]: "If it fails in this, it changes into the nature of a woman." He means, then, by the first generation the descent from the intelligible world.

---

[1] Παρεδίδου: Note the use of the imperfect.

[2] "Now for divine begettings, there is a period comprehended by a perfect number…". ἔστι δε θείῳ μεν γεννητῷ περίοδος.

[3] Σχήματα in an astrological sense.

[4] Ἐξελίττομενος.

Commentary

Syrianus here describes the πρώτη γένεσις as the descent of the individual soul. Proclus gives two other opinions on the topic before that of Syrianus. Iamblichus appears first (278.2 ff.):

> "As for the 'first birth' which the philosopher now relates, and which the Demiurge, in announcing the laws of fate, declares to the souls, what are we to say that it is? For more than one view is taken of it. The divine Iamblichus, for one, calls the 'sowing' (of souls) into vehicles the first birth, and admittedly what follows bears him out; for Plato added directly following on this passage the phrase 'and how it was needful that they, when sown…'"[5]

For Iamblichus, the sowing of souls into their γένεσις is the first birth.[6] Regarding the *ochēma*, Proclus explains that souls, once in a primordial, non-bodily form, are sown into vehicles and given their allotments.[7] After this point, souls are placed under fate and must descend and associate with generation.[8] The second explanation of the "first descent" (278.5 ff.) is from an anonymous source, possibly Theodore or Plutarch of Athens, who argues that the first birth is the single descent of souls into

---

[5] Trans. Dillon (1973), Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 85 Dillon.

[6] See Iamblichus, *de Anima*, 26: Plotinus, Porphyry, and Amelius assign equal status to all souls and bring them forth from the supercelestial soul to reside in bodies:

"The depiction of the soul's first coming into existence seems very different in the *Timaeus*. The Demiurge sows them among all the superior classes, throughout all the heaven, and into all the elements of the universe. Thus, the demiurge's sowing of souls will be divided around the divine creations, and the first processions of souls will come into existence along with it and will comprise the receptacles for the souls." trans. Finamore-Dillon. In section 29, Iamblichus says that there are three classes of souls, the first two descend willingly, while the third is forced to descend. It appears that even the pure soul descends, although he is not explicit in arguing this: "For the soul that descends for the salvation, purification, and perfection of this realm is immaculate in its descent. The soul, on the other hand, that directs itself about bodies for the exercise and correction of its own character is not entirely free of passions and was not sent away free in itself. The soul that comes down here for punishment and judgement seems somehow to be dragged and forced." Trans. Finamore-Dillon (2002).

[7] Finamore and Dillon (2002) 150: "The 'first coming into existence' (πρώτη ὑπόστασις) is the soul's earliest and highest existence at the supercelestial level; the 'sowing' (σπορά) brings the soul into the cosmos and associates it and its ethereal vehicle with a soul and vehicle of a leader-god; the descent (κάθοδος) brings the soul into the world of generation and into its corporeal body." See Finamore (1985) 89–90.

[8] Proclus, *In Tim*. III, 275.26–277.5. Porphyry's position on this is that only the soul of the philosopher can escape the cycle of reincarnations. *De Regressu Animae* (Bidez, fr. 11), 4, p. 41*21 f. See Smith (1974) 56.

generation—ἡ μία κάθοδος τῶν ψυχών (ἁπλῶς διορίζεται μίαν γέ τινα κάθοδον). Proclus addresses this opinion using γάρ with indirect statement (278.7), indicating that he disagrees with ἄλλος τις. The problem, however, is not with the chronology of the soul first being sown into the vehicle, followed by a descent into generation, but rather with denoting the sowing as "the first descent" in particular.

Syrianus' interpretation, as the third listed, responds to the anonymous opinion (278.10). While he agrees with the anonymous interpreter that the "first generation" refers to the descent of the soul into generation, he argues that there is not one descent absolutely. Instead, Syrianus says that the soul descends once for every divine circuit.[9] He gives the argument that if a soul were to descend for one circuit, it must necessarily descend with every circuit, as every circuit is the same, and it does not make sense that a soul would remain above for some circuits, but not others.

The difficulty with the argument rests with whether a soul can stay above for every circuit. That every soul descends is a Iamblichean opinion[10] that is contrary to Plato's account in the *Phaedrus*.[11] Nevertheless, Syrianus eliminates the possibility for a class of souls that does not descend with little explanation. The mainstay of the argument appears in 278.19–20 where Syrianus says that the life of the individual soul is inferior to the circuit of the all. If it were able to stay aloft throughout the whole circuit it would require an unchanging intellectual power—the argument Proclus uses to explain why every soul must descend.[12] It

[9] *Rep*. 46 B. Cf. Dam. *In Phaed*. II 147 West., a comment on *Phaed*. 113e6, where Syrianus is reported as holding, in a manner corresponding to this, that the assertion that the souls of the worst sinners never reascend from Tartarus must refer simly to any given cosmic cycle (περίοδος).

[10] In passages 26–27 of the *de Anima*, Iamblichus discusses the descent of souls. He appears to argue that every soul must descend, either voluntarily or involuntarily, according to the *Timaeus*. Iamblichus, *de Anima*, 27: "Some of them [Taurus and his followers], consistently with the *Timaeus*, teach that this [the descent of the soul] occurs for the completion of the universe so that there will be just as many living things in the cosmos as there are in the intelligible realm."

[11] *Phaedrus* and the myth of the charioteer: 256 Aff. As the charioteer goes round the circuits of the universe, it is possible for him to command "the wicked horse" and not descend (254 E).

[12] See Proclus, *ET*, prop. 211: "For suppose that some part of the soul remains in the intelligible. It will exercise perpetual intellection, either without transition from object to object or transitively. But if without transition, it will be an intelligence and not a fragment of a soul, and the soul in question will be one which directly participates an intelligence; and this is impossible (prop. 202). And if transitively, the part which has perpetual intellection and that which has intermittent intellection will be one substance. But this is impossible, for they differ in kind, as has been shown (prop. 184); and it is,

is thus in the nature of the soul to descend so that each soul in every circuit must descend once using its own free will (278.25–26).

Although all souls make their first descent from the intelligible realm, some souls have a greater number of descents than others.[13] According to Syrianus, in the second descent of the soul, the soul takes on the form of a woman—hence, it seems that while all souls must descend, the necessarily repetitious descents in some way weaken or diminish the soul. Proclus attaches the idea of the descent of the soul to the nature of the soul, which is mixed with good and strife. This is most clear in his exposition of the charioteer in the *Phaedrus* myth as it appears in *In Alc.* 227.8.[14]

moreover, unaccountable that the highest part of the soul, if it be perpetually perfect, does not master the other facilities and render them also perfect. Therefore every particular soul descends entire." Translation Dodds (1963).

[13] Proclus, *ET* prop. 206. Certain exceptional souls might spend many periods in the intelligible world (Proclus, *In Crat.* cxvii).

[14] "The Socrates of the *Phaedrus* says that our faculties are mingled with the opposite of good and are filled with strife against each other and on this account sometimes the better prevail, sometimes the worse. And why waste words, seeing that the same speaker observes that even the charioteer is corrupted: 'wherein, through the fault of the charioteer, many souls are lamed, and many have much of their wings broken.' Yet what is nobler within us than the power of the charioteer? This it is which recalls things divine and uses the secondary and tertiary faculties as means towards recollection and this is clearly stated in the *Phaedrus*." Proclus, *In Alc.* 227.8 ff., trans. O'Neill (1965). Two aspects of soul, when in conflict, cause the soul to descend. The soul descends in its entirety (see Proclus, *ET* prop. 120). This notion is contrary to Porphyry's, which states that part of the soul remains permanently above. Porphyry, in turn, adapts Plotinus' view that some souls never descend into the body but are able to govern their lower selves unaffected by trouble (*Enn.* IV.8.2). Human souls, however, through their own fault and boldness sink partially, although part of the soul remains in contemplation of the intelligible (*Enn.* VI.4.14).

Proclus, *In Prm.* 640.13–641.4

Οἱ μὲν οὖν παλαιοὶ περὶ τῆς τοῦ Παρμενίδου προθέσεως τοῦτον διέστησαν τὸν τρόπον· ὅσα δὲ συνεισήγαγε ταῖς τούτων ἐπιστάσεσιν ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμών, ἤδη λεκτέον. εἶναι μὲν δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς τὸν σκοπὸν πραγματειώδη τοῦ διαλόγου τοῖς οὕτως ἑλομένοις τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ὡμολόγει, τήν τε ἀντιγραφὴν ὡς ἀπίθανον χαίρειν ἀφείς—τὸ γὰρ δεῖσθαι μὲν τὸν Ζήνωνα τοῦ Παρμενίδου τοῖς παροῦσι γυμνάσαι τὴν μέθοδον, ἐκεῖνον δὲ ἐν τῷ γυμνάζειν ἀμύνεσθαι τὴν Ζήνωνος πραγματείαν, πρὸς τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν εἰρημένοις παντελῶς ἀπίθανον—καὶ πρὸς τῇ ἀντιγραφῇ ταύτῃ τῇ ληρώδει τὸν περὶ τῆς γυμνασίας τῆς ἐκκειμένης σκοπόν· εἰ γὰρ ἔδει τινὸς παραδείγματος αὐτῷ πρὸς τὴν τῆς μεθόδου σαφήνειαν, ἄλλο τι τῶν προχείρων ἂν παρέλαβεν ἐξαρκοῦν εἰς παραδείγματος ἰδέαν, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τὸ σεμνότατον τῶν ἑαυτοῦ δογμάτων πάρεργον ἂν ἐποιήσατο τῆς κατὰ τὴν γυμνασίαν διδασκαλίας, καίτοι νέοις προσήκειν ταύτην ἡγούμενος, ἐκεῖνο δὲ πρεσβυτικῆς εἶναι διανοίας καθορᾶν, καὶ οὐδὲ ἀνθρωπίνης, ὡς ἐν τοῖς ποιήμασί φησιν, ἀλλὰ νύμφης Ὑψιπύλης τινός.

Τοιοῦτον δ' οὖν οἰόμενος εἶναι τὸν σκοπόν, οὔτε περὶ τοῦ ὄντος οὔτε περὶ τῶν ὄντων αὐτὸν[a] εἶναι μόνων διετείνετο· συγχωρῶν δὲ εἶναι περὶ τῶν πάντων, ἠξίου προστιθέναι καθ' ὅσον ἑνὸς πάντα ἐστὶν ἔκγονα καὶ εἰς ἓν ἀνήρτηται πάντων αἴτιον…

[a] **αὐτὸν** corr. Steel ex g (*ipsam*): **αὐτῶν** ΑΣ

These are the differences of opinion among the ancients with respect to the purpose of the *Parmenides*. Now we must say what our Master has added to their interpretations. He agrees with those of our predecessors who thought the aim of the dialogue is metaphysical, and dismisses the idea that it is a polemic as implausible. That Zeno should ask Parmenides to practise his method before the company and that Parmenides in exhibiting it should defend himself against the treatise of Zeno is altogether incredible in light of what has been said: and to make its purpose an exposition of method is as silly as the idea that it is a polemic. For if he had need of an example in order to make his method clear, he would have taken some other readily available topic as an illustration, instead of making the most august of all his doctrines incidental to the teaching of method, though he considered this method appropriate only to young men. To understand that august doctrine requires the intellect of an older man, and indeed an intellect more than human, as he says in his poem, and rather that of a nymph, Hypsipyle.[1]

Considering such to be the dialogue's purpose, our Master denied that it was about Being, or about real beings alone; he admitted that it was about all things, but insisted on adding "in so far as all things are the offspring of one cause and are dependent on this universal cause."

[1] This is a very odd reference, which Proclus keeps a mystery. Dillon notes that this, Proclus' name for Parmenides' divine guide in the poem, is not mentioned elsewhere (1987) 36, note 23. The name is borne in mythology elsewhere by the queen of Lemnos, who had two children with Jason, but she is hardly relevant; cf. Apollodorus *Bibliotheke* I, ix, 17; III, 4; Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* I, 609–909.

Commentary

In this fragment, Syrianus adopts the view that the subject of the *Parmenides* is metaphysical. Syrianus' contribution to the topic was to set the One, rather than Being, as the topic for the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides*. Before giving his Master's opinion, Proclus runs through previous commentators on the *Parmenides*, whom he groups according to their opinions on the subject of the dialogue; a grouping which also happens to be fairly chronological as well. There are those who approach the *Parmenides* as a dialectical exercise; those who give an ontological interpretation, focusing on the One Intelligible Being, in particular; those who give a henological interpretation; and others, including Proclus and Syrianus, who give a theological reading of the text.[2] I will run through these rather cursorily here, as they have been adequately treated by Dillon in his introduction to the *Commentary on the Parmenides*.[3]

The first group (630.37–633.12) which Proclus lists in his history of interpretation includes those who thought that the *Parmenides* was an exercise in logical method with a polemical aim. Proclus says that these interpreters suggest the *Parmenides* was an *antigraphe* against Zeno on the intelligibles, a suggestion he dismisses. The second view (633.12–635.27) argues that the dialogue could not have a polemical purpose as that is not consistent with its contents. This group claims that the dialogue is a logical exercise with the aim of offering practice in the exercise of logical disputation.[4] It appears, on the other hand, that the first century CE Neopythagorean Moderatus appealed to a metaphysical interpretation of the *Parmenides*,[5] making use of the first three

[2] These categories were created by Steel, who emphasizes the henological interpretation of the text in his article (1997) 16.

[3] Dillon (1987) 7–8.

[4] See Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* 6, where he finds in the *Parmenides* the ten categories of Aristotle. See Festugière (1954) 93. On the *Parmenides* as a logical exercise, see Albinus, *Isagoge* 3; Diogenes Laertius III, 58; Philoponus *In Anal. Pr.* 9. 18–19; Alex. Aphr. *In Topica*, 28.23–29.5; and is the topic of Proclus' *Platonic Theology* I, 9.

[5] Dodds (1928) 129–142, argued that the following passage from a work of Porphyry *On Matter* presents us with an interpretation of the first three hypotheses of Plato's *Parmenides*: "It seems that this opinion concerning Matter was held first among Greeks by the Pythagoreans, and after them by Plato, as indeed Moderatus tells us. For he (sc. Plato), following the Pythagoreans, declares that the first One is above Being and all essence, while the second One—which is the 'truly existent' and the object of intellection—he says is the Forms; the third—which is the soul-realm—participates in the One and the

hypotheses, at least, and it is possible that the practice of interpreting this dialogue goes back to Speusippus, though that must be regarded as speculative.[6] In *Platonic Theology* I. 9, Proclus gives a lengthy discussion of why the *Parmenides* is a dialogue on Being, not a *gymnasia* of dialectic. In *Platonic Theology* I. 9. p. 38, lines 4–7, Proclus says, "We then have a reason to say that the *Parmenides* does not have logic as its aim, rather it seems to constitute a science of all the first principles as its aim."

The next group identified by Proclus concerns those who hold that the *Parmenides* is a metaphysical dialogue. While philosophers since Plotinus declared that the first hypothesis concerns the primal Good,[7] an argument existed based on what, if anything, to include with the One. This group is again broken into three groups, the third being the opinion of Syrianus, while the first two groups are attributed to "the ancients" by Syrianus.

The first group (635.31–638.2), which holds a doctrine of One Being, rather than the One, says that the subject of the *Parmenides* is Being. This group cites *Theaetetus* (183 E) where Socrates says that in his youth he heard an old Parmenides philosophise about Being. The supporter of this opinion claims that logical gymnastics are important, but only for elucidating the real purpose of the *Parmenides*. In 637.9 he brings up the point that no Platonic dialogue has the study of a method for its topic. Thus, Plato did not introduce logic as the subject of the *Parmenides*, but as a means of positing both existence and non-existence of the subject Being. It has been suggested that the proponent of this argument is

forms, while the lowest nature which comes after it, that of the sense-realm, does not even participate, but receives order by reflection from those others, Matter in the sense-realm being a shadow cast by Not-Being as it manifests itself primally in Quantity, and which is of a degree inferior even to that." The first One is above Being and all essence, a view adapted and elaborated upon by Porphyry and Iamblichus. For a discussion of this Moderatus passage, see Dillon (1977) 347–348.

[6] See Dillon's argument (2003) 56–57. In the following passage in Plato's *Commentary on the Parmenides* (VII, pp. 38, 32–40, 7 Klibansky): "For if the first One participated in Being in some way, although it is higher than Being and produces it, it would be a one which took over the mode of reality which belongs to Being. But it is not a one, and is the cause not just of Being but of everything, though of Being before the rest. And if everything must participate in its cause, there must be a "one" other than a simply One, in which Being participates; and this "one" is the principle of beings. This is also how Speusippus understands the situation (presenting his views as the doctrines of the ancients)." Proclus credits Speusippus with the doctrine of a first One followed by a second One, which Being participates.

[7] Proclus, *In Parm.* 1053.39–1054.1; Steel (1997) 16.

Origen the Platonist.[8] While Proclus refers to the doctrines of Origen anonymously in the *Commentary on the Parmenides*,[9] he refers to Origen explicitly in the *Platonic Theology*. In *Platonic Theology* II. 4, Proclus refutes Origen, who did not accept the Plotinian One, but rather took the *Parmenides*' denial of all things posited in the first hypothesis to mean that the transcendent One did not exist. Origen maintains that the One is without existence and substance; Intellect is the highest principle; and absolute Being and the absolute One are identical.[10]

The second group listed (638.14–640.16) likewise agrees that the subject of the *Parmenides* is metaphysical, but supposes that the dialogue is about the One Being (ἓν ὄν) and all those who get their reality from the One (περὶ ἁπανάντων τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς ὑποστάντων). This group posits that all things attributed and denied of the One cannot be applied to the One Being alone, hence the discussion must be about all things from the primary cause down to the lowest (639.1–2). This view is consistent with that of Plotinus,[11] Porphyry, and Iamblichus.[12] In *Platonic Theology* I. 10, Proclus explains the Plotinian doctrine as follows:

---

[8] See the introduction to the Saffrey and Westerink (1974) x–xx. See also, Dillon (1987) 8.

[9] Saffrey and Westerink point to a number of passages in the *Parmenides Commentary* in which Proclus refers to "a certain one" who holds the doctrine that the first hypothesis is an impossibility. Saffrey and Westerink attribute these passages to Origen: *In Parm.* VII, P. 64.1–16; *In Parm.* VII, p. 36.8–31; and *In Parm.* VII, p. 64.25–66.24 are key passages.

[10] See Proclus, *PT* II, 4, p. 31.15–17. The key passage for this interpretation is *Parmenides* (142A6–8). In Proclus' commentary on this lemma, he regards Origen as follows: "Some people have therefore been persuaded by this passage to say that the first hypothesis reaches impossible conclusions, and so that the One is not a real subject. For they associate all the negations into one hypothetical syllogism: 'If the One exists, it is not a whole, it has not a beginning, middle or end, it has no shape', and so on, and after all the rest, 'It has no existence, is not existence, is not expressible, is not nameable, is not knowable.' Since these are impossibilities, they concluded that Plato himself is saying that the One is an impossibility. But this was really because they themselves held that there is no One that is impartipable by existence, and, therefore, that the One is not different from Being nor from the One-Being, and that 'One' has as many modes as being, and that the One that is beyond being is a mere name." VII, 64.1–16. See 1065.2 ff. where Proclus introduces this discussion.

[11] Plotinus, *Enn.* V.1.

[12] Proclus attacks Iamblichus in *PT* III, 23: "The argument in the first hypothesis is not, as some say, about God and the gods. For it is not lawful to connect the multiplicity with the One itself and the One with the multiplicity; for the primal God is absolutely transcendent above all things. But in the first hypothesis, he denies both being and the One itself of the first. This, however, does not befit the other gods, as is evident for everyone." Translation Steel (1997) 20.

> "But some people who follow the philosophy of Plotinus say that the noetic nature that is shown there, gaining its subsistence from the hyperessential cause of everything, and they attempt to harmonize all the conclusions deriving from this with the unique and perfect nature of the intellect" (I. 10, p. 42, 4–9, S-W).

This is certainly consistent with Iamblichus, who derives a hierarchy of being from the One and who attributes a positive reference to all nine hypotheses.[13] Iamblichus co-united henads with the One in the first hypothesis and placed intelligible beings in the second hypothesis. Iamblichus, furthermore, places the *hen on* at the summit of the intelligible realm.[14]

The third metaphysical opinion is that of Syrianus. Proclus lumps the views of Syrianus' predecessors together as those of "the ancients" (οἱ παλαιοὶ), emphasizing his own closeness in time and doctrine to Syrianus. Syrianus accepts the opinion of the second group that the dialogue is primarily metaphysical. While he does not mention the opinion of the first group that the dialogue is possibly logical in aim, he does dispute claims that the *Parmenides* is polemical. If Zeno's purpose was to teach a dialectical method, Syrianus argues, he would not have chosen such a difficult metaphysical topic to use as an example (640.27–37). This is especially true as one usually teaches dialectical methods to young men, who would most certainly misunderstand the weighty doctrine of the dialogue. Next, Proclus reports that Syrianus believes (οἰόμενος εἶναι τὸν σκοπὸν) the *skopos* of the dialogue is about neither Being nor about real beings only. Here, Syrianus accepts the view of his predecessor (Iamblichus?), but qualifies it in a characteristic way: the *Parmenides*

[13] Iamblichus places the henads in the first hypothesis with the One. Cf. *In Parm.* 1051.37–1052.2, where Iamblichus makes the first hypothesis about "God and gods", the One and the divine henads, and 1066.22, where Proclus states the following: "Necessarily, then, if indeed only the divine is above Being, and all that is Divine is above Being, the present argument could be either only about the primal God, who surely is the only entity above Being, or else it is about all the gods also which are after him, as some of those whom we revere hold. So they argue that since every god, inasmuch as he is a god, is a henad (for it is this element, the One, which divinises all being), for this reason they think it right to join to the study of the First a discussion of all the gods; for they are all supra-essential henads and transcend the multiplicity of beings, and are the summits of beings." On the debate concerning Iamblichus and the henads, see Dodds (1963) 257–260 and 346; Dillon (1972) 102–106; Saffrey and Westerink (1978) xxviff; Dillon (1993) 48–54. While Dillon identifies these intelligible unities as henads, Saffrey and Westerink identify them as intelligible gods.

[14] Steel (1997) 22.

discusses Being and all beings, in so far as all beings are the product of the One.[15]

We see this opinion reappear in 1061.20ff., which, based on a statement in 1061.25 regarding Proclus' guide of philosophy in Athens, appears to be Syrianus' view on the matter. Proclus reports the following of Syrianus in 1061.32: "His view, then, also is that the first hypothesis is about the primal God, and the second is about the intelligible world", and he takes up the issue again in 1065.1–1071.8, this time without crediting his teacher. In 1071.4ff., Proclus declares that the One, not One-Being, as transcendent cause, apart from the divine orders, is the subject of the first hypothesis. Thus, Syrianus recognizes the different attributes of being one are the different classes of gods such that the attributes coming from "the One that is" are the equal to the series of divine classes.[16] Proclus, moreover, adapts this position expressed in *PT* 1, 4, p. 20, 20–23.

[15] Steel attributes this interpretation to Iamblichus (1997) 16.
[16] Steel (2009) 204.

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1033.17–1034.22

Ἢ βούλεσθε, ἐπειδήπερ δοκεῖ πραγματειώδη παιδιὰν παίζειν, ἀπ᾽ ἐμαυτοῦ ἄρξομαι καὶ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ ὑποθέσεως, περὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς αὐτοῦ ὑποθέμενος, εἴτε ἔν ἔστιν εἴτε μὴ ἕν, τί χρὴ συμβαίνειν;—Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, φάναι τὸν Ζήνωνα [*Parm.* 137b1–5].

Εἰ δὲ δεῖ τἀληθέστατα λέγειν, οὕτωσὶ ῥητέον ὡς ὁ ἡμέτερος ὑφηγεῖτο καθηγεμών, ἄρχεσθαι μὲν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς ⟨ὄντος⟩[a]—τὸ γὰρ εἰ ἓν ἔστιν, ἔχον πρὸς τῷ ἓν καὶ τὸ ἔστι, ταύτῃ προσήκει τῇ τάξει τῶν πραγμάτων—, ἀνατρέχειν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς ὄντος ἐπὶ τὸ ἕν, δεικνύντα σαφῶς ὅτι τὸ κυρίως ἓν μόνον τοῦτο βούλεται τὸ ἓν εἶναι καὶ ἁρπάζει ἑαυτὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄντος· καὶ ὡς δεύτερον ἀπὸ τούτου τὸ ἓν ὂν διὰ τὴν ὕφεσιν εἰς τὸ εἶναι προελθόν, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ἓν κρεῖττον καὶ τοῦ ἔστι· καὶ τοῦ εἰ ἔστιν· ἅμα γὰρ τῷ ἔστιν οὐ μένει τὸ κυρίως ἕν· ὥστε καὶ ὅτι τὸ ὄντως ὂν ὑποτίθεται καὶ τὸ ἓν ὄν, ἀληθές, καὶ ὅτι διὰ τῆς ὑποθέσεως ταύτης ἄνεισιν ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸ τὸ ἓν, ὅπερ αὐτὸς ἀνυπόθετον ἐν Πολιτείᾳ προσονομάζει· δεῖν γάρ φησιν ἀεὶ δι᾽ ὑποθέσεων χωρεῖν, ἵνα τελευτήσωμεν ἀνιόντες ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνυπόθετον, τὸ ἕν· πᾶσα γὰρ ὑπόθεσις ἔκ τινός ἐστιν ἄλλης ἀρχῆς. εἰ δέ τις τὴν ὑπόθεσιν ἀρχὴν ποιήσαιτο, περὶ |τούτου ταῦτα ῥητέον, [ἃ] περὶ[b] τῶν γεωμετρικῶν ἐκεῖνος εἴρηκεν· ᾧ γὰρ ἀρχὴ μὲν ὃ μὴ οἶδε, τελευτὴ δὲ καὶ μέσα ἐξ ὧν οὐκ οἶδε οὐδεμία μηχανὴ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐπιστήμην εἶναι· μόνον οὖν ἀρχὴ καὶ ἀνυπόθετον τὸ ἓν, ὥστε τὸ ὑποτιθέμενον ἄλλο τί ἐστι καὶ οὐ τὸ ἕν· ἄνεισι δὲ ἀπὸ τούτου πρὸς τὸ ἕν, ὡς ἀπὸ ὑποθέσεως ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνυπόθετον.

ὅθεν δὴ καὶ θαυμάσειεν ἄν τις τὸν Παρμενίδην τῆς ὅλης μεταχειρήσεως τῶν λόγων· εἴτε γὰρ [τὸ ἕν ὑπέθετο],[c] τὸ ἀνυπόθετον εἰς ὑπόθεσιν ⟨ἂν⟩ παρέλαβε, καὶ τὸ ἄναρχον ὡς ἐξ ἀρχῆς, καὶ οὐδ᾽ ἂν ἠκολούθει

[a] **ὄντος** add. Dillon. [b] **ἃ περὶ** Steel ex g (*que de*): **ἀπὸ** ΑΣ γεωμετρικῶν ΑΣ: geometris g (**γεωμετρῶν** Γ?) [c] **τὸ**….**ὑπέθετο** add. Steel partim ex g (*le unum supponibile*) | **ἂν** add. Strobel| **παρέλαβε** A [3]: **παρελάμβανε** Σ

"Would you like me, since we decided to play out this laborious game, to begin from myself and my own hypothesis, hypothesisng about the One itself, that is, what must follow if one assumes that the One is, or that it is not?" "By all means," said Zeno.

But if one is to get nearest to the truth, one must follow the line of our Master, that Parmenides begins from the One (for the proposition "If there is a One," since it contains besides "One" also the concept of existence, belongs to this rank of things), and ascends from the One-Being to the One, thus demonstrating clearly that the One in the strict sense wishes only this, to be One, and 'snatches itself away' from Being; and that the One Being is second to this by reason of its descent towards Being, whereas the One itself is superior even to the designation "is" and the hypothesis "if it is"; for as soon as we add "is", the One in the strict sense will no longer remain. So that it is true that he hypothesises Real Being and One-Being, and that by means of this hypothesis he ascends to the One itself, which he himself in the *Republic* [VI 510 B] describes as "non-hypothesised." For he says that it is necessary always to proceed through hypotheses, in order that we may culminate our ascent at the non-hypothesised One; for every hypothesis starts from a principle other than itself. But if one were to make the hypothesis a first principle, one would have to say about it something which he [Plato] said about geometry; if something has a first principle which one does not know, and a conclusion and middle terms, therefore, built up from what one does not know, in no way can such a thing be an object of scientific knowledge [*Rep*. VII 533 C]. The only thing, then, that is non-hypothesised is the One, so that whatever is hypothesised is something else and not the One; but he ascends from this to the One, as from an hypothesis to the non-hypothesised.

One might thus properly wonder at the whole structure of Parmenides' discourse here; for if on the one hand, he had assumed as an hypothesis that which was non-hypothesised, and taken what has no first principle as proceeding from one, then he would not have been following

τῇ μεθόδῳ λεγούσῃ πάντως ὑποθέμενόν τι σκοπεῖν τὸ ἑξῆς· εἴτε μὴ τὸ ἓν ⟨ὂν⟩ ὑπέθετο,[a] ἀλλά τι τῶν πορρωτέρω τοῦ ἑνός, οὐκ ἂν τὴν ἐπ' αὐτὸ ῥᾳδίαν ἐποιήσατο μετάβασιν, οὔδ' ἂν αὐτοφυῶς καὶ ἀβιάστως ἀνέφηνεν ἡμῖν τὴν πρὸ τοῦ ὄντος αἰτίαν. ῞ιν' οὖν καὶ τὸ ἓν ἀνυπόθετον μένῃ, καὶ ὅμως ἀπό τινος ὑποθέσεως οἰκείας αὐτὸς ἐπὶ τὸ ἓν ἀναδράμῃ, τὸ ἓν ὂν ὑπέθετο προσεχῶς ὂν μετὰ τὸ ἓν, ἐν ᾧ τάχα καὶ πρώτως τὸ ἓν κυρίως· ἐπὶ γὰρ τοῦ ἑνὸς τοῦ ἐπέκεινα οὐδὲ τοῦτο κυρίως. Καὶ οὕτως ἀπό τε τῆς οἰκείας ὑποθέσεως, φησίν, ἄρχεται τοῦ ἓν ὄν [ὄντος],[b] καὶ τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ εἰ ἓν ἔστι· καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνυπόθετον ἐγγύθεν μεταστάς, ἀναφαίνει τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐξῃρημένης ἑνάδος τῶν ὄντων ἁπάντων ὑπόστασιν.

[a] **ἓν**… **ὑπέθετο** Strobel: *unum supponibile* g **ἐνυπόθετον** Σg **ἀνυπόθετον** A^3 [b] **ἓν ὄν** Σg: **ἑνὸς** A | **ὄντος** delevimus ex g

his method, which calls for in every case hypothesising something and seeing what follows from it; or, on the other hand, if he assumed what was not hypothesised, but something more or less remote from the One, it would not have been easy for him to make the transition to it, nor would he have been able to reveal to us the cause of Being naturally and without strain. In order, then, that the One might remain non-hypothesised, and yet that it might ascend easily to the One from an hypothesis closely akin to it, he postulated the One-Being, as being next in order to the One, and in which the term "one" finds, perhaps, its first proper use; for in the case of the One itself which is "beyond", not even this term is proper. And in this way, as he says, he both begins from his own hypothesis, which is the One-Being, and this is the significance of the hypothesis "If there is a One;" and moving thence to the non-hypothesised, he makes manifest the derivation of all things from the transcendent henad of beings.

Commentary

This fragment discusses the meaning of the second hypothesis, "if the One is", in which Plato focuses on the fact that the One exists. Proclus questions why Parmenides calls his hypothesis an exposition of the One in this lemma, when it seems that he only discussed Being in his poem. Syrianus reasons that Parmenides can move his discourse from Being to the One based on the understanding that the postulation of the One involves Being. Syrianus invokes a modification to the more elaborate position of the predecessors that Plato is simply following a doctrine of the One or the historical Parmenides by arguing that all this can be derived from Parmenides' own hypothesis.

Syrianus does not dispute with predecessors here, but begins with Parmenides' hypothesis in the text. While Plato's One in the *Parmenides* is a higher entity, Parmenides' description of the One begins with One Being. He takes his start from the lower entity of One Being because he says he cannot begin with that which is unhypothesisable, if the One is indeed a remote and transcendent entity.[1] Syrianus explains that Parmenides begins from his own first principle of the One Being and makes the premise the same in the first and second hypothesis: in the first hypothesis, he focuses on oneness and in the second, he focuses on the fact that it exists.[2] He then ascends from the One Being to the One itself. He makes this move from One Being to One through a logical argument that if the One is just one, it is impossible to speak of it. Since it is possible to speak of the One, it exists and must partake in existence. The One Being, thus, for Parmenides is the One in the strictest sense.

In 1032.30 Proclus states the opinion of *tines*, lumping together the opinions of a set of people which may well include Porphyry and Iamblichus. Proclus begins the discussion by questioning how Parmenides could have called the One his own hypothesis when he never discussed the One. For Proclus, the postulation of the One cannot be a logical exercise, but the basis of an ontological metaphysics that encompasses all

[1] Syrianus says that both Plato and Plotinus propose that the One is ὑπερούσιον (*In Met*. N, 183, 1–3 Kroll). The interpretation of Plato's Good as the One beyond Being is hardly new to Platonic thought. See Dodds (1928) 129–142 and Rist (1962) on the history and Neopythagorean background of the One in Platonism. See Steel (1992) 57, where he argues that Plato never intended for the One to be beyond One-Being.

[2] Steel puts it nicely, saying that this is based on the premise that the first principle cannot be the One which is the object of the second hypothesis, the One which is. Steel (1992) 58.

other hypotheses. This group claims that Parmenides says nothing about the One. The question in the lemma, thus, is a deliberate correction by Plato of the historical Parmenides, who is made to present a doctrine of the One that is not being. These critics make three points: 1) Plato corrects Parmenides by drawing out the implications of Parmenides' position; 2) Parmenides in his Poem only talks of Being because what is not (including what is above Being) cannot be discussed; 3) With Zeno, however, he discussed a higher principle. What follows is then an *aporia* by Porphyry on the historical Parmenides who argued that the first principle is the One that is Being, not *hen*. Plato, according to Porphyry, makes Parmenides say that the One is superior to Being by creating the Parmenidean hypothesis "if being is one". Furthermore, Plato is possibly justified in doing this due to what may have been discussed between Parmenides and Zeno in unwritten discourses on higher being. Plato thus not only corrects Zeno but he reminds us of the unwritten Parmenides. With this, Plato presents a more refined Parmenides than what probably existed in reality: the Platonic Parmenides called his own hypothesis "the one which postulates the *hen*".

In 1033.9ff., Syrianus, while not referring to his predecessors, responds to their argument that Plato was being non-Parmenidean by drawing on unwritten doctrines. Syrianus disagrees and comes to a different conclusion by incorporating everyone else's solution into his own. Syrianus investigates the relation between One and One Being. One Being is an intermediary principle that connects the transcendent One with Being—as such, it acts as the first member of the second hypostasis. The One-Being is characterised by a multiplicity denied of the One[3] that connects it to the rest of differentiated existence; the presence of One-Being, thus, allows Syrianus, and Proclus to create a fluid, connected universe, while protecting the transcendent nature of the One. That the One exists beyond Being is at the heart of both the *Parmenides* and *Sophist* for the Neoplatonists.[4] Proclus uses both texts to show how the One is separated from the One Being because it exists beyond Being.[5] One Being functions as the first member of the second hypothesis as it is the lowest aspect of the One as found in Intellect. The purpose of the discussion here is to relate One and One Being; Syrianus' (and Proclus')

[3] Steel (1992) 56.

[4] See *Sophist* 244B6–245 D 11 on the existence of the One beyond Being.

[5] Proclus discusses *Parm*. 137 C 2–3 in a number of passages: See *In Parm*. 638.19–36; 1032.26–1035.32; 1049.40–1050.31; 1077.19–1079.26; 1093.19–1094.17.

argument for this states that 1) the first hypothesis is a reality and 2) the first hypothesis does not allow one to identify One and Being, something both Origen and Porphyry are responsible for doing, which leads to their proposition that Intellect is the first principle or, in Porphyry's case, that the One is also the first element of the intelligible triad; thus, Origen and Porphyrys' positions are not the same.[6]

[6] See Proclus *PT* II, 4.

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1061.25–1064.10

Εἰεν δή, φάναι· [εἰ] ἕν ἔστιν, ἄλλο τι οὐκ ἂν εἴη πολλὰ τὸ ἕν.—Πῶς γὰρ ἄν;—Οὔτε ἄρα μέρος αὐτοῦ οὔτε ὅλον αὐτὸ δεῖ εἶναι. -Τί δή; [*Parm.* 137c4–6].

Δοκεῖ μὲν γὰρ δὴ καὶ αὐτῷ τήν τε πρώτην ὑπόθεσιν εἶναι περὶ θεοῦ τοῦ πρωτίστου καὶ τὴν δευτέραν περὶ τῶν νοητῶν· ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ πλάτος ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ πολλαὶ αἱ τάξεις εἰσὶ τῶν θεῶν, ἑκάστην τούτων τῶν θείων τάξεων συμβολικῶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ὀνομάζεσθαι, καὶ πάσας δι' ὀνομάτων φιλοσόφων ἐκφέρεσθαι, καὶ οὔτε τῶν[a] εἰωθότων ὑπὸ τῶν τὰς θεογονίας γραψάντων ὑμνεῖσθαι οὔτε τῶν τὰς ὑπάρξεις αὐτῶν δηλούντων, οἷαι δή εἰσιν αἱ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν ἐκδεδομέναι τῶν θείων ἐπωνυμίαι γενῶν· ἀλλ', ὡς ἔφην, διὰ τῶν γνωρίμων τοῖς φιλοσόφοις, οἷον ὁλότητος, πλήθους, ἀπειρίας, πέρατος, οἰκείως ἐχόντων πρὸς αὐτὰς παραδίδοσθαι, τάξιν ἐχόντων πρέπουσαν, καὶ πάσας ἀπαραλείπτως ἀφερμηνεύεσθαι τὰς θείας προόδους, νοητάς, νοεράς, ὑπερκοσμίους· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο παραλαμβάνεσθαι τὰ ἑπόμενα πάντα, σύμβολα τῶν θείων ὄντα διακόσμων· καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις πάντα ὅσα καταφατικῶς ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ λέγεται τῶν ὑποθέσεων, ταῦτα ἀποφάσκεσθαι κατὰ τὴν πρώτην εἰς ἔνδειξιν τοῦ τὴν μὲν πρώτην αἰτίαν πασῶν ἐξῃρῆσθαι τῶν θείων διακοσμήσεων, ἐκείνας δὲ ἄλλας κατ' ἄλλας[b] ἀφωρισμένας ἰδιότητας προεληλυθέναι· τὸ γὰρ ἐν ταύτῃ ἓν οὔτε τὸ πρῶτόν ἐστι—συμπέπλεκται γὰρ πᾶν τῷ ὄντι[c]—οὔτε τὸ ἀχώριστον τοῦ ὄντος καὶ οὕτως ὡς ἕξις τις ἐν αὐτῷ ὄν· σαφῶς γοῦν αὐτὸ διακρίνει, καὶ χωρὶς εἶναί φησι τοιοῦτον τὸ ἓν τοῦτο. δῆλον δὴ ὅτι θείας ἑνάδος ἐστὶν αὐτοτελοῦς σημαντικόν· πᾶν γὰρ τὸ χωριστὸν αἴτιον πλήθους ἡγούμενον διττὸν ἀπογεννᾷ πλῆθος, τὸ μὲν χωριστὸν ἑαυτῷ ὅμοιον, τὸ δὲ ἀχώριστον τῶν μετεχόντων· ὡς γοῦν ἡ μία ψυχὴ τὰς μὲν ἐγεννήσατο ψυχὰς σωμάτων χωριστάς, τὰς δὲ ἀχωρίστους, ὡς ὁ εἷς καὶ ὅλος νοῦς

[a] **τῶν** $A^1\Sigma$: **τῷ** A [b] **ἄλλας κατ' ἄλλας** corr. Steel ex g (*alias secundum alias*): **ἄλλας κατ' ἄλλην** Σ (**ἄλλας κατ ἄλλων** R) **ἄλλως κατ' ἄλλας** A | **ἀφωρισμένας** A: **ἀφορισμένας** Σ [c] **πᾶν**… **ὄντι** Saffrey-Westerink: **πάντα οὖν** MΣg **πάντα νῦν** A^3 **πάντα τῷ ὄντι** Cous^2

"Well then," said Parmenides, "if there is a One, of course the One would not be many." "How could it?" "So there cannot be any parts of it, nor can it be a whole." "Obviously."

His view, then, also is that the first hypothesis is about the primal God, and the second is about the intelligible realm. But since there is a broad range in the intelligible realm, and there are many orders of gods, his view is that each of these divine orders has been named symbolically by Plato and all have been expressed by philosophical names, not by such names as are customarily celebrated by those who compose theogonies, but which do not reveal their essences, such as are the epithets of the divine classes given out by the gods, but rather, as I said, by names familiar to philosophers, such as Whole, Multiplicity, Limitlessness, Limit, which are suitable for application to them, all having their proper rank, and portraying without omission all the divine stages of procession, whether intelligible, intellectual or supracosmic, and that thus all things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of beings; and also that the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics. For the One in the second hypothesis is neither the primal One (for it is complex, being entirely interwoven with Being) nor is it that which is inseparable from Being and thus, as being a state of it, is in it. He thus clearly distinguishes this One from the first and declares that this One, being such as it is, is distinct. It is plain, in fact, that this term signifies an autonomous divine henad; for every transcendent cause at the head of a multiplicity produces a double multiplicity, one which is transcendent like itself, and another which is immanent in its participants. Even as the single Soul has generated some souls separate from bodies, and some which are inseparable, and as the one and whole Intellect has given substance to some intellects separate from souls, and others which are in them as functions of them, so also the One has produced

ὑπέστησε τοὺς μὲν νόας χωριστοὺς τῶν ψυχῶν, τοὺς δὲ ἐν αὐταῖς ὄντας καθ' ἕξιν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ ἓν παρήγαγε τὰς μὲν αὐτοτελεῖς ἑνάδας ἐξῃρημένας τῶν μετεχόντων, τὰς δὲ ὡς ἑνώσεις ἄλλων οὔσας τῶν κατ' αὐτὰς ἡνωμένων καὶ ἐν οἷς εἰσι· πᾶσαν οὖν τὴν δευτέραν ὑπόθεσιν ἐκφαίνειν ἡμῖν ἑνάδων πλῆθος αὐτοτελῶν, ὧν ἐξήρτηται ταῦτα περὶ ὧν διδάσκει ἡ δευτέρα ὑπόθεσις, τὰς ἰδιότητας αὐτῶν διὰ τούτων, ὁποῖαι δή τινές εἰσιν, | ἡμῖν ἐμφανίζουσα πάσας ἐφεξῆς. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο ἀληθές, δεῖ σκοπεῖν ἕκαστα τῶν συμπερασμάτων ποίαις προσήκει τάξεσι θείαις, καὶ οὕτω δὴ κατ' ἄρθρα ποιεῖσθαι τὴν τῆς δευτέρας ὑποθέσεως διαίρεσιν.

τήν γε μὴν τρίτην οὐχ ἁπλῶς εἶναι περὶ πάσης ψυχῆς, ἀλλ' ὅση μετὰ τὴν θείαν προελήλυθε· πᾶσαν γὰρ τὴν θείαν ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ περιέχεσθαι· σαφῶς γοῦν ἐν ἐκείνῃ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Πλάτων εἴρηκεν ὅτι ἄρα τὸ ἓν καὶ χρόνου μετέχει· τὸ δὲ χρόνου μετέχειν ψυχαῖς προσήκει πρώταις, καὶ οὐ ταῖς νοεραῖς οὐσίαις παρ' αἷς οὔτε τὸ ἦν οὔτε τὸ ἔσται, ἀλλὰ μόνον τὸ ἔστι τὸ αἰώνιον.

διῃρημένης οὖν τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας εἴς τε τὴν ἐκθεουμένην καὶ τὴν καθ' ἑαυτὴν ὁρωμένην, πᾶσαν ἁπλῶς τὴν ἐκθεουμένην ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ παραδίδοσθαι τῶν ὑποθέσεων, εἴτε νοητὴν, εἴτε νοερὰν, εἴτε ψυχικὴν ὑπάρχουσαν, ὥστ' εἴπερ ἐθέλοις καὶ κατὰ ταύτην[a] τὴν θεωρίαν ἀκοῦσαι τὰς ὑποθέσεις ἑξῆς ὅπως διετάχθησαν, τὴν μὲν πρώτην ὑπόθεσιν τίθει περὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς εἶναι θεοῦ, πῶς γεννᾷ καὶ διακοσμεῖ πάσας τὰς τάξεις τῶν θεῶν· τὴν δὲ δευτέραν περὶ τῶν θείων τάξεων πασῶν πῶς προεληλύθασιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑνὸς, καὶ ⟨περὶ⟩[b] τῆς συνεζευγμένης ἑκάσταις οὐσίας·[c] τὴν δὲ τρίτην περὶ τῶν ψυχῶν τῶν ὁμοιουμένων μὲν θεοῖς, οὐσίαν δὲ ἐκθεουμένην οὐ κληρωσαμένων· τὴν δὲ τετάρτην περὶ τῶν ἐνύλων, πῶς παράγεται [καὶ][d] κατὰ ποίας τάξεις ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν· τὴν δὲ πέμπτην περὶ ὕλης ὅπως ἀμέτοχός ἐστι τῶν εἰδητικῶν ἑνάδων, ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπερουσίου καὶ μιᾶς ἑνάδος λαχοῦσα τὴν ὑπόστασιν· μέχρι γὰρ τῆς ὕλης τὸ ἓν καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἔλλαμψις[e] ἥκει, φωτίζουσα καὶ τὸ ταύτης ἀόριστον.

---

[a] **κατὰ ταύτην** Dillon: **κατ' αὐτὴν** ΑΣg [b] **περὶ** add. Steel [c] **οὐσίας** corr. Steel ex g (*substantia*): **οὐσίαις** ΑΣ [d] **καὶ** add. Steel ex g (*et*) [e] **ἐλλαμψις ἥκει** inv. A

some autonomous henads which transcend their participants, and others which act as unifications of other entities which are unified in virtue of them and in which they inhere. The whole second hypothesis, therefore, he says, reveals to us a multiplicity of autonomous henads, on which are dependent the entities about which the second hypothesis teaches us, revealing to us in its terms all their specific characteristics in turn. If this is true, we must examine each of the conclusions to see to which of the divine orders it is appropriate, and thus make division of the second hypothesis "limb by limb" (*Phaedr*. 265 E).

As for the third, it is not about all Soul pure and simple, but such as has proceeded forth from the divine Soul; for the whole divine Soul is comprised in the second hypothesis. For Plato himself has clearly stated there that the One partakes also of Time; and partaking of Time is the property first of souls, not of intellectual beings, among whom there is neither "was" nor "will be", but only the eternal "is" [cf. *Tim*. 37 E ff.].

So then, having divided the whole of Being into the divinised, and that which is taken on its own, he declares that the whole of the divinised Being is presented in the second of the hypotheses, be it intelligible, intellectual, or psychic. So if you would like to hear the subjects of the hypotheses in order according to this theory also, the first he declares to be about the One God, how he generates and gives order to all the orders of gods. The second is about all the divine orders, how they have proceeded from the One and the substance which is joined to each. The third is about the souls which are assimilated to the gods, but yet have not been apportioned divinised being. The fourth is about Forms-in-Matter, how they are produced according to what rankings from the gods. The fifth is about Matter, how it has no participation in the formative henads, but receives its share of existence from above, from the supra-essential and single Monad; for the One and the illumination of the One extends as far as Matter, bringing light even to its boundlessness.

Commentary

At the start of his discussion of the first hypothesis, Proclus traces the identification of the number and subject matter of the Parmenidean hypotheses in the history of the Platonic school. In a pivotal passage for our appreciation of Syrianic metaphysics, he arrives at Syrianus' statement on the nine hypotheses in which Syrianus says that what is systematically denied of the One in the first hypothesis is affirmed of the One in the second hypothesis, so that each positive attribute corresponds in order to the preceding negation. This exegesis provides the shape of Proclus' metaphysics as laid out in his *Commentary on the Parmenides* and *Platonic Theology*.

Proclus' own statement on the nine hypotheses, as well as his survey of the philosophical history of the nine hypotheses, is well laid out by Dillon in *Proclus' Commentary on the Parmenides*[1] and Saffrey and Westerink in *Platonic Theology* I.[2] Still, this survey should be summarised here to show the importance of Syrianus' interpretation, especially where it differs from Iamblichus'.

Proclus establishes that the *Parmenides* has nine hypotheses (five positive, four negative) expressing the different senses of One and Not-Being.[3] The five positive hypotheses represent the three ways in which the One relates to Being (1041.22 ff.): 1) in so far as it is superior to Being (identified with One); 2) coordinate with Being (Intellect); and 3) inferior to Being (Soul).[4] The two remaining positive hypotheses represent the two senses of Not-Being. It is "Not Being" in its relationship to others which participate it: 1) relative or contingent (physical world); 2) absolute Not-Being (pure matter).[5] This system includes all meanings of the One, in so far as it is One, Being, or One and Being, or when it is not-existent in some senses or absolutely not-existence.

Thus, Proclus lists the nine hypotheses (5 positive, 4 negative) as follows (1040.1–19):

---

[1] Dillon (1987) 385–383.

[2] Saffrey-Westerink (1968) lxxix–lxxxix.

[3] Proclus defends this in 1042.22 by arguing that if the One were to only have one sense, there need be only one hypothesis.

[4] Proclus cites the *Timaeus*; see *In Tim.* II, 250.22 ff. (on *Tim.* 36 C).

[5] Proclus finds proof for this in Plato's *Republic* V 478 B ff.

1st: relationship of the One superior to Being to itself and other things
2nd: One cordinate with Being
3rd: One inferior to Being to itself and other things
4th: relationship of others which participate in the One to themselves and to the One
5th: the relations the others which do not participate in the One have to themselves and to the One
6th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of existing in one way and not in another, to itself and to other things
7th: the relations of the One (if it does not exist), in the sense of absolute non-existence, towards itself and others
8th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as non-existent) in the sense of existing in one way and not in another
9th: the relations of the others to themselves and to the One (when taken as absolutely non-existent.)

Dillon identifies an early group of commentators who take the One in only one sense, which Proclus touches very briefly upon in 1041.15–1041.20.[6] While he does not identify this group and it seems the group could be a rhetorical device, Proclus condemns the view, arguing that such a multiplicity of hypotheses—some arguing positively, others, negatively—would be impossible. The Middle Platonic delineation of the hypotheses is dismissed without discussion in 1051.34.

Proclus next elaborates on the views of three groups of Platonic philosophers before he gives the view of Syrianus.[7] Proclus dismisses these groups as not looking at the structure of Parmenides' procedure (1052.16). All three groups identify the hypotheses with divine ranks, although they differ with regard to the ranks and to the number of hypotheses. Again, these authors have been surveyed already[8] with regard to their view of the number of hypotheses, and will be only briefly covered here. Iamblichus' opinion on the matter, however, will be elaborated when we come to Syrianus' discussion.

[6] Dillon writes about possible identification of this non-Neoplatonic group in his introduction to book VI of the *Parmenides Commentary*. See (1987) 386.

[7] He describes the subject of the first hypothesis as One, the second, as Intellect, the third, Soul. See Dillon (1973) 387–388. In *Enn*. IV.2.2.52–55, on forms in Matter and Matter alone.

[8] See Dillon (1987) 387 ff. and Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxx ff.

The first group consists of Amelius, Porphyry, and Iamblichus (1051.34–1064.17). Proclus lumps these commentators into a single group, despite their differences, because they do not see that the first five hypotheses concern positive conclusions and the last four, negative ones (1056.1 ff.) and so attempt to identify a distinct level of reality for each of them.

According to Amelius[9] (1052.31–1053.35), Parmenides describes eight hypotheses which correspond to orders of reality, structured as One, Intellect, Soul (two classes), and Matter:

1st: One
2nd: intellect
3rd: rational souls
4th: irrational souls
5th: matter in so far as it participates in forms
6th: matter in its ordered aspect
7th: matter in its aspect as totally devoid of forms
8th: Form-in-Matter

Proclus agrees in principles with the subjects, but he finds fault with the number of hypotheses (1053.9–35). He also criticises the ordering of reality, arguing that Form is superior to Matter and should not be eighth, especially since Matter cannot receive Form (1053.20–26).

Next are the philosophers who identify nine hypotheses. The first among these is Porphyry[10] (1053.38–1054.37):

1st: primal God
2nd: Intelligible realm
3rd: Soul
4th: ordered Body
5th: unordered Body
6th: ordered Matter
7th: unordered Matter
8th: Forms-in-Matter, considered in their substratum
9th: Forms-in-Matter, considered by themselves apart from Matter

[9] There is some uncertainty as to whether this figure is Amelius. See Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxx.

[10] On the identification of Porphyry, see Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxxi–lxxxii. This fragment is further evidence that Porphyry wrote a commentary on the *Parmenides*.

Proclus approves of the order and principle of division, but criticises this scheme for being redundant in places (1054.10–18). Proclus argues that matter does not differ from unordered or ordered body. Also, Proclus says that Porphyry does not confine himself to the first principles of things, as ordered body is not a principle (1054.20ff.).

The next philosopher is identified as Iamblichus (1054.37–1055.26).[11] Iamblichus identifies the following nine hypotheses:[12]

1st: God and the gods (the divine henads)[13]
2nd: intellectual and intelligible beings
3rd: superior beings (angels, daemons, and heroes)[14]
4th: rational souls
5th: secondary souls woven onto the rational souls
6th: Forms-in-Matter and the seminal reason-principles
7th: Matter itself
8th: body in the heavens
9th: generated body beneath the moon

Proclus faults this view for including the superior classes of beings; if they are at the intellectual level, then they ought to be in the second hypothesis, if they are at the level of soul, they ought to be included in the hypothesis about soul (1055.17–23).[15] This scheme, moreover, also includes products (sc. body), rather than only first principles, according to Proclus (1055.23–25).

The first commentator to arrange the hypotheses into positive and negative conclusions was the "the philosopher from Rhodes",[16] a mysterious figure who delineated ten hypotheses, which he divided into two groups of five (1057.5–1058.21). The first five describe the state of being if the

[11] On the identification of this commentator as Iamblichus, see Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxxii, note 1. See Iamblichus *In Parm*. Fr. 2 Dillon.

[12] See Proclus, *PT* I, 11 on Iamblichus' identification of hypotheses.

[13] One of the few interpretations which does not say that the first principle concerns only the primal god.

[14] Proclus finds this rather remarkable, as Iamblichus makes these classes of beings superior to universal souls. Damascius attributes this doctrine to Iamblichus in *De Princip*. II, p. 247.25–15 Ruelle (= Iambl. *In Parm*. fr. 12 Dillon).

[15] In Proclus, *PT* III, 23, Proclus accuses Iamblichus of addressing the intelligible gods twice in the first hypothesis. On this criticism, see Steel (1997) 26.

[16] For a discussion on the identification of this figure, see Saffrey (1984), who thinks it may conceal a reference to Theodore of Asine.

particular level in question exists, the second group shows what there would be if it were not to exist. The second group of five concerns the first five:

1st and 6th hypotheses: One (if the One were to exist, if it were not to exist).
2nd and 7th hypotheses: intellect and intelligible (if the intellect and intelligible realm exists, what may be true, if it does not exist, that what was said in the second hypothesis is now no longer true.)
3rd and 8th hypotheses: discursive intellects (if they exist, they are in accordance with our conceptions, if they do not exist, they are in discordance with them.)
4th and 9th hypotheses: embodied forms (if the One exists, these exist; if the One does not exist, they do not exist, either.)
5th and 10th hypotheses: receptacle of bodies (the receptacle is harmonised through the existence of the One, the receptacle is not harmonised because the One is non-existent.)

Proclus praises the structural neatness of this passage, but criticises it for describing ten hypotheses and calls some of the pairings absurd (1058.2–6).

The last commentator (1058.21–1061.20) before Syrianus is the only one mentioned by name: Plutarch, "our grandfather", returns to Porphyry and Iamblichus' description of nine hypotheses. Plutarch, however, like the previous commentator, divides the conclusions into two sets. Plutarch, most notably, divides the conclusions into "true conclusions" if the One exists, and "absurd conclusions" if the One does not exist. The first five concern those external to things and those immanent in them if the One exists:

1st: God
2nd: Intellect
3rd: Soul
4th: Forms-in-Matter
5th: Matter

The last four show that if the One present in beings does not exist:

6th: If the One does not exist, only sensible beings will exist
7th: If the One does not exist, every mode of knowledge will not exist

8th: If the One does not exist, things are in a state of dreams and shadows
9th: If the One does not exist, things will not even obtain dreamlike substantiality.

Plutarch's system proves important for Proclus because it creates a hierarchy whereby all orders of reality are connected to the One.[17]

Proclus admires this arrangement, as it makes the first hypothesis about the One and hypotheses two through five about things eternally existent, followed by four hypotheses which show the absurdities if the One does not exist (1061.1 ff.).

The last opinion arrived at is Syrianus' (1061.20–1064.12), who treats the subject on the theological level.[18] Syrianus uses the hypotheses to describe the entire intelligible universe, including all the divine ranks. As with Porphyry and Plutarch, he states that the first hypothesis is about the primal God and the second, the intelligible world. The third hypothesis concerns souls proceeding from the divine soul, the fourth, being united to matter, and the fifth, matter. As with the other Platonic commentators, Syrianus aligns the *megista genē* with the divine orders, so that "Limit" and "Unlimitedness" represent ranks of gods. As with Porphyry, Iamblichus and Plutarch, he delineates nine hypotheses, dividing them into two groups; the first five are positive, describing "if the One is", the next four are negative, describing "if the One is not". Proclus lists the first five as follows:

1st: One God—generates and gives order to gods
2nd: the divine orders and how they proceeded from the One
3rd: souls assimilated to gods[19]
4th: forms in Matter
5th: Matter, how it has no participation in the henads, but receives its share of existence from above

This division of two groups, one five, the other four, which have a loose correspondence with one another, is similar to the one the philosopher from Rhodes and Plutarch describe (apart from, with respect to Plutarch, reversing which group describes "if the One is" and "if the One is not"); it differs in its content, that is, its hypostases outline divine beings as they

[17] Saffrey and Westerink (1968) lxxxvii–iii.

[18] In his historical survey of the interpretation of the *Parmenides* in *In Parm.* 630.37–645.8, Proclus says that Syrianus is the inventor of the theological interpretation of the *Parmenides* (cf. 641.1; 1061.20 ff.).

[19] The first three of these appear in Proclus, *PT* I, 11, p. x.

emanate from the One, and it differs in the way in which the hypotheses relate to one another. Perhaps Syrianus' greatest contribution to the issue comes at 1062.10–17:

> "… all things are presented in logical order, as being symbols of divine orders of being; and also that the fact that all those things which are presented positively in the second hypothesis are presented negatively in the first indicates that the primal cause transcends all the divine orders, while they undergo various degrees of procession according to their various distinct characteristics."[20]

What is negated of the One in the first hypothesis has a positive analogue in the second hypothesis. The hypotheses describe a complete universe. Unlike his predecessors, moreover, he argues that the hypotheses are connected to one another so that the higher produce the lower and contain the lower. Syrianus does not consider the One in its absolute state even in the first hypothesis; instead, Syrianus describes the One in its capacity for generating gods.[21] What, one may ask, is Proclus' objection to Iamblichus? I think it is two-fold: 1. Hypothesis I is not about the henads, it is about how the One generates henads; and 2. Iamblichus seems to have described his henads as *noeta*, objects of intellection, which would for Proclus be the subject of Hypothesis II.

In 1063, Proclus recounts Syrianus' concept of the henads—that each intelligible level is presided over by a henad.[22]

Syrianus clarifies the content of the second and third hypotheses. The second concerns the intelligible/intellective realm, including the pure Soul,[23] while the third concerns souls which proceed from pure soul.[24] This passage follows the subject of *In Parm.* 1062.3, with few substantial differences. Here, Proclus says that Syrianus shows the second hypothesis includes a discourse about the All-Soul, while the third hypothesis is about soul in itself. The three hypotheses relate in so far as the

[20] Trans. Morrow-Dillon.

[21] In this way, Syrianus is similar to Iamblichus, who said that the first hypothesis is about God and gods. Unlike Iamblichus, however, Syrianus leaves a full discussion of divine orders to the second hypothesis. See Steel (1997) 20.

[22] Whether debt is owed to Iamblichus on this theory or not has been the subject of much debate, although in a nod to Dillon, I will have to concur that Iamblichus seems to be the author of at least a basic doctrine on the henads. On the debate concerning the authorship of the henads, see Saffrey and Westerink (1978) ix–xvii, li–lxxvii, who attribute the doctrine of the henads to Syrianus. Dillon in (1973) 412–416, and (1993) identifies Iamblichus as the author of the doctrine.

[23] Plato, *Parm.* 151E–155C.

[24] Plato, *Parm.* 155E–157B.

second proceeds from the first, and the third from the second. The fourth hypothesis discusses forms in matter and the fifth, matter.

Proclus elaborates on Syrianus' statement on the relationship between soul and time in *In Parm*. 1217.13–15 (Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 6 Wear) and in *Platonic Theology* I, 11, he discusses how time relates to the third hypothesis, especially how individual souls are characterised by participation in time.

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1114.29–1116.16

Οὐκοῦν εἰ μηδὲν ἔχει μέρος, οὔτ' ἂν ἀρχήν, οὔτε τελευτήν, οὔτε μέσον ἔχοι· μέρη γὰρ ἂν ἤδη αὐτοῦ τὰ τοιαῦτα ⟨εἴη⟩.[a] ὀρθῶς. [*Parm.* 137d5–7]

Εἴρηται μὲν οὖν, ὅπερ ἔφην, καὶ ταῦτα ὀρθῶς. ἔτι δὲ τελειότερον ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγεμὼν ἔλυε τὴν ἔνστασιν, λέγων ὅτι μὴ ταὐτόν ἐστιν ἐπισκοπεῖν ἡμᾶς ὅπως ἔχει πρὸς ἑαυτὸ καὶ πῶς πρὸς τὰ|ἄλλα τὸ ἓν, καθάπερ ἐπεσημηνάμεθα πολλάκις. τούτων δὲ διακεκριμένων τῶν προβλημάτων, εἰκότως ὁ Πλάτων νυνὶ θεωρῶν τίνα οὐχ ἕπεται τῷ ἑνὶ πρὸς ἑαυτό, καὶ ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσον αὐτοῦ καὶ τελευτὴν ἀπέφησε· ταῦτα γὰρ πλῆθος ἂν ἡμῖν τῷ ἑνὶ συνεισήνεγκεν. ὁ δέ γε Ἀθηναῖος ξένος οὐ πῶς ἔχει πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ὁ θεὸς εἴρηκεν, ἀλλὰ πῶς ἔχει πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα, καὶ ὅτι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχει καὶ τὰ μέσα καὶ τὴν τελευτήν, τούτων μὲν ἐν τοῖς πᾶσιν ὄντων, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν τῷ θεῷ, τοῦ δὲ θεοῦ, διότι πρὸ πάντων ἐστί καὶ τοῦ ἔχειν ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσα καὶ τελευτὴν {καὶ}[b] καθαρεύοντος, συνέχοντος δὲ τὰ ὄντα πάντα, ἐν οἷς τὰ τρία ταῦτά ἐστιν. ὥστε, καὶ εἰ περὶ τοῦ πρώτου ποιοῖτο[c] τὸν λόγον καὶ ἐν ἐκείνοις, οὐ μάχεται τοῖς ἐνταῦθα λεγομένοις· οὐ γὰρ ὅτι ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὸν τὴν τριάδα ταύτην ὁ θεὸς ἔχει, λέγει ὁ Ἀθηναῖος ξένος, ἀλλ' ὅπως πᾶσιν ἐπιβέβηκε τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν οἷς τὰ τρία ταῦτά ἐστιν.[d] εἰ δὲ ἐν Ἐπιστολαῖς περὶ τὸν πάντων βασιλέα τὰ πάντα εἶναί φησι καὶ ἐκείνου ἕνεκα πάντα καὶ ἐκεῖνο αἴτιον πάντων καλῶν, δῆλον δὴ ὅτι καὶ ἀρχὴ πάντων ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος καὶ τέλος καὶ μέσον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸς ἀρχὴν ἔχει καὶ μέσον καὶ τελευτήν· καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνο[e] πῶς ἔχει πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα διδάσκει, καὶ οὐ πῶς ἔχει πρὸς ἑαυτό. τῶν οὖν ἄλλων ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ, μέσον, τέλος τὸ πρῶτον, ἀλλ' οὐ καθ' αὑτὸ διαιρεῖται εἰς ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσον καὶ τέλος· καὶ γάρ ἐστιν ἀρχὴ μὲν πάντων, ὅτι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ πάντα· τέλος δέ, ὅτι ἐπ' αὐτὸ πάντα· πᾶσα γὰρ ὠδὶς καὶ πᾶσα κατὰ φύσιν ὄρεξις πρὸς τὸ ἕν, ὡς μόνως ἀγαθόν, ἀνατείνεται· μέσον δέ, ὅτι πάντα τὰ κέντρα τῶν

[a] **εἴη** add. Steel ex. A PLAT. codd. (cf. infra, 1111.20): om. **Σ**g [b] **τελευτὴν** ΑΣ: *finem et consummationem* g| **καὶ**[2] del. Steel cum M [c] **ποιοῖτο** scrip. Steel: **ποιοῖ** ΑΣ [d] **ταῦτά ἐστιν** inv. A [e] **ἐκεῖνο** scrip. Steel: **ἐκεῖνα** ΑΣg

"So then, if it has no parts, it has neither a beginning nor an end, nor a middle; for such things would already be parts of it." "Quite right."

These views, as I have said, are quite correct. But our own Master has solved the objection still more perfectly, saying that it is not the same thing for us to examine how the One is related to itself and how it is related to others, as we have indicated many times before this. Once these problems have been sorted out, it seems reasonable that Plato here, where he is considering what does not follow for the One in relation to itself, has denied it beginning and middle and end; for these would as far as we are concerned have introduced with them multiplicity into the One. The Athenian Stranger [*Laws* IV, 715 E], on the other hand, is not saying what relation God has to himself but what relations he has to others, and that he possesses beginning and middle and end, these things being present in the universe and not in God, while God himself, because he is prior to everything, is pure from having beginning and middle and end, but holds together all existing things, in which these three elements exist. So that even if the discussion does concern the first God in that passage also, it does not contradict what is said here. For the Athenian Stranger is not saying that god possessed this triad in himself and in relation to himself, but that he transcends all the beings in which these three elements are. And if in the *Letters* [II, 312 E] he declares that all things are about the king of all, and for his sake all things are and he is the cause of all nobility, it is plain that he says this because that entity is the beginning of all things and their end and their middle, but he is not because of this himself possessed of beginning and middle and end; for that passage teaches what relation God has to others, and not what his relation is to himself. Of other things, then, the first principle is beginning and middle and end, but he is not himself divided into beginning and middle and end; for he is the beginning of all things because all things are directed towards him; for all pangs of desire and all natural striving are directed towards the One, as the sole Good; and he is the middle because all the centres

ὄντων, εἴτε νοητῶν, εἴτε νοερῶν, εἴτε ψυχικῶν, εἴτ' αἰσθητῶν, εἰς ἓν αὐτὰ ἐπερείδεται,[a] ὥστε [καὶ][b] ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος ἐστὶ καὶ μέσον πάντων τὸ ἓν· αὐτὸ δὲ πρὸς ἑαυτὸ τούτων οὐδὲν ἔχει, διότι μηδὲ ἄλλο|τι πλῆθος. ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲ πρὸς ἕτερον· οὔτε γὰρ ἀρχὴν ἔχει, διότι μηδὲν αὐτοῦ κρεῖττον μηδὲ ἀπ' αἰτίας ἐστίν· οὔτε τέλος· οὐδενὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἕνεκά του, πᾶν δὲ τὸ ἔχον τέλος ἕνεκά του πάντως ἐστί, τὸ δὲ ἓν μόνον οὗ ἕνεκα, καθάπερ ἡ ὕλη καὶ τὸ ἔσχατον τῶν ὅλων ἕνεκά του μόνον· οὔτε μέσον ἐστὶ τοῦ ἑνός, περὶ ὅ ἐστι ὡς μέσον τὸ ἓν, ἵνα μὴ πολλὰ εἴη τὸ ἓν ὧν ἐστι μέσον. πάντων ἄρα τούτων ἐξῄρηται τὸ ἓν καὶ οὐδὲν δεῖ τούτων αὐτῷ προσφέρειν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὁ Πλάτων ὑφηγεῖται, μένειν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀποφάσεων. καὶ γάρ, ὅταν αὐτὸ λέγωμεν ἐφετὸν ἢ τέλος, τὴν τῶν ἄλλων δηλοῦμεν ἀνάτασιν· φύσεως γὰρ ἀνάγκῃ πάντα τὰ μετὰ τὸ πρῶτον ἐφίεται τοῦ πρώτου· καὶ πῶς γὰρ ἂν ἐγκεκεντρισμένα[c] τῷ πρώτῳ καὶ ἐνερριζωμένα δύναιτο μὴ ἐφίεσθαι τῆς ἑαυτῶν αἰτίας; ταῦτ' οὖν ἐστι τὰ πρὸς ἐκεῖνο τὴν σχέσιν ἀναδεδεγμένα, ἐκεῖνο δὲ ἁπάντων ὁμοίως ἐξῄρηται.

[a] **ἐπερείδεται** corr. Steel ex g (*firmantur*): **διαιρεῖται** AΣ (**ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνίδρυται** coni. Cous[2]) [b] **καὶ**[1] add. Steel ex g (*et*) [c] **ἐγκεκεντρισμένα** corr. Steel ex g (*incentrata*): **κεκεντρισμένα** MΣ **κέντρα ἔπεται** A[4]

of existent things, whether intelligible, intellectual, psychic or sensible, are established in the One; so that the One is the beginning, the middle and the end of all things, but in relation to himself he possesses none of these, seeing that he possesses no other type of multiplicity; but not in relation to anything else either, for he neither has beginning, because nothing is superior to him, nor does he derive from a cause; nor does he have end, for he does not exist for the sake of anything, but everything that has an end in all cases exists for the sake of something and the One is only that for the sake of which things exist, even as Matter, and in general the lowest element in all things, is only for the sake of something; nor is there a middle of the One, around which as middle the One exists, that the One may not be a Many of which there is a middle element. The One is, then, transcendent over all these things, and one should not apply any of them to it, but, as Plato instructs us, we should rest content with the negations. For when we say that it is an object of striving or an end, we are indicating the efforts of other things towards it; for by the compulsion of nature all things after the First strive towards the First. How indeed, if they are centred and rooted in the First, could they not strive towards their own cause? These, then, are things which have acquired a relation towards it, but it is transcendent over all things equally.

Commentary

Parmenides 137 D raises the question of whether the One has parts and how these parts may or may not preclude it having a beginning, middle and end. This negative argument has its positive counterpart in the Second Hypothesis at 145a4–8, which argues that the One is an unlimited entity which contains wholes and parts in a transcendent fashion (see below, *In Parm.* Fr. 5.) In this first hypothesis, Syrianus argues that the One is beyond multiplicity and only contains beginning, middle and end "with respect to others", i.e, in so far as it contains everything in the universe. Syrianus' opinion is in answer to an aporia stated in Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides* 1113.33 in which *Laws* IV 715 E and *Parmenides* 137 D are alleged to contradict one another on whether God can have a beginning, middle and end.

Before Proclus comes to the aporia, he addressed the geometrical and arithmetical problems raised by commentators on the lemma. First, he defines beginning, middle and end as parts, and then defines part. Proclus argues that the One can have no beginning, middle and end because these entities are parts and only more partial, inferior beings have parts.[1] The first group of commentators argues that everything with a beginning, middle, and end must have this beginning, middle and end as parts of itself. Nothing with a limit, for instance, can have an unlimited number of parts. These commentators give the example of a line: a line begins and ends with a point, but contains an unlimited number of points.[2] The line, then, cannot be comprised of these points, although points constitute its limits. Moreover, he says that because the One is unlimited, it could contain beginning, middle, and end as its parts. The discussion moves to an explanation of part, which is denied of the One.[3]

---

[1] Proclus, *In Parm.* 1111; *ET* prop. 67 "that which causes all wholes to be wholes is prior to the parts". Proclus says that each member of the triad is represented by beginning, middle and end. See also Proclus, *PT* II, 12, p. 67, 14ff.

[2] Proclus, *In Parm.* 1111.23–35. See Nicomachus, *Intr. Arith.* II 6 p. 36: "Unity occupies the place and character of a point, will be the beginning of intervals and of numbers, but not itself an interval or number, just as the point is the beginning of a line, but is not itself a line or interval."

[3] The discussion of beginning, middle and end is an offspring of the much wider debate, which considers the relationship of wholes and parts. See Proclus, *ET* 67; *PT* III, 25, p. 165; for three senses of whole: whole before parts, whole of parts, whole in parts. In her article Glasner differentiates between division into parts and division into beginning, middle and end. Division into parts, she says, is interpreted in terms of "whole before parts" (1992) 198.

The One cannot be composed of different elements because it is a unitary entity.

Secondly, even if it were to have limits, these limits must be composed of parts with limits.[4] Beginning, middle, and end are parts and hence limits. The conclusion to be drawn is that the One, as an unlimited body, cannot contain limits.

In *In Parm.* 1112.26–35, Proclus sets out the three definitions of part:

1. A part is that which contains the same elements as the whole,[5] only in a partial[6] manner.[7]
2. A part makes up a totality.[8]
3. A part is linked with other things for the completion of one entity.[9]

Because the One is removed from all multiplicity, it can contain no parts, including beginning and end, in all three of the above senses.[10]

After Proclus sets out the issue of the whole and part, he addresses the aporia raised by those who advance the statement of the Athenian Stranger in *Laws* IV 715 E,[11] where he finds his solution with Syrianus. The problem lies in Parmenides' apparent contradiction of the Athenian Stranger in the *Laws*, where the Stranger says that God possesses beginning, middle and end.[12] Proclus gives the opinion of two sets of commentators in reply to this aporia. The first group of commentators

[4] The argument also reflects a larger discussion regarding forms and matter. Proclus, *In Eucl.* 86.23–87.3: "In the forms separable from matter, the ideas of the boundaries exist in themselves and not in the things bounded… but the forms inseparable from matter, the limits surrender themselves to the things they limit, they establish themselves in them becoming, as it were, parts of them and being filled with their inferior character." Trans. Morrow (1970). The One falls into the category of the first—an entity in which the idea of boundary exists in itself.

[5] See Proclus, *ET* props. 66–69.

[6] Theodore of Asine (Proclus, *In Tim.* II, 274.10): three modes of wholeness; see also Proclus, *ET* prop. 23 and 65.

[7] Part is measure. See Euclid's *Elements* VII, def. 3; Proclus, *PT* XXV.165: identifies the relation of whole before parts to wholes of parts with genus and species.

[8] *pars qua quantum*, Aristotle's *Met.* 1023b13, book V Euclid's *Elements*. See *Parm.* 137 C: whole is the form where no part is missing.

[9] *Prot.* 329 D: parts can be similar to the whole, like pieces of gold, or different like parts of a face. In the second hypothesis, the understanding of part is one being because of its parts. See Glasner (1992) 197. See also *Sophist* 244 E: a whole in the sense that it has the property of unity.

[10] Proclus, *In Parm.* 1113.

[11] "O men, that God who, as old tradition tells, holdeth the beginning, the end, and the centre of all things that exist, completeth his circuit by nature's ordinance in straight, unswerving course." Translation Bury (1926). Bury notes that this is probably Orphic.

[12] Proclus, *In Parm.* 1113.

says that God contains beginning, middle, and end in a hidden mode.[13] Proclus argues against the concept that the One contains parts in an expressible manner as only secondary entities can contain multiplicity. This idea is based on the connection between the term *kruphiōs* (in a hidden mode) and *diêrêmenôs* (distinction). The concept seems particularly Iamblichean based on a comment in Iamblichus' *Phaedrus Commentary* where he says that forms are present at the higher level of *nous* only as monads of forms, in a hidden manner. The second group,[14] identified as Plutarch of Athens by Dillon—although the author could be Iamblichus—says that both the Athenian Stranger and Parmenides are talking about God, but the Athenian Stranger is discussing the Demiurge in particular. Proclus is polite about this group, which is to be expected, considering that Plutarch is Proclus' spiritual grandfather. This group—in what seems to be typical Syrianic mode—refers to how the Demiurge is divided into a triad, with its beginning, middle, and end compared to each member of the demiurgic triad.

In *In Parm.* 1114.25, Proclus arrives at the view of Syrianus, who denies the possibility that the god discussed is the Demiurge. Instead, he argues that the one god is discussed in two different aspects in the two texts. In the *Parmenides*, Plato looks only to how the One relates to itself and denies it a beginning, middle, and end. In the *Laws*, however, the Athenian Stranger discusses how the One relates to the world. Syrianus' solution to this apparent contradiction is that both parties are correct. Because it is impossible to believe that Plato contradicts himself, Syrianus conjectures that Plato gives a different emphasis to different things. In the *Laws*, the relation of God is to creation—in this kind of external relation, God functions as a triad. With himself, however, as in the case of the *Parmenides*, God acts as a monad.[15] Syrianus' explanation delves into the two aspects of God, with the purpose of denying multiplicity to the

[13] In his introduction to book VI of the *Parmenides Commentary*, Dillon tentatively identifies this commentator as Iamblichus, whereas Hadot connects him with Porphyry. Of late, however, Dillon retracts this, noting that it can perfectly well be Porphyry and the second commentator Iamblichus, as the philosophy actually fits Porphyry's doctrine of the One being father of the noetic triad. See Dillon (1987) 398 and 457 note 93; Hadot (1968).

[14] See Dillon (1987) 458, note 95.

[15] This distinction between "with respect to itself" and "with respect to others" is prior to that of beginning, middle and end; see Glasner (1992) 98. In *In Euclid* 98.13–14, Proclus says, "the point is twofold, because it exists either by itself or in the line." The division into beginning, middle and end relates to the concept of part and boundary (Proclus, *In Parm.* 1116; 1125; *In Eucl.* 142.8–143.5).

One, but attributing all things to it as the cause of creation. Because the beginning, middle, and end are present in the universe, they must also exist in God. Syrianus explains that the One is the beginning as the source of all things, the centre of all things because all things are established in it, and the end, because it is the goal to which all things strive.[16] Still, the One is not himself possessed of beginning, middle and end. Proclus uses this passage of the *Parmenides* to prove the existence of the absolute One. He makes the case in *Platonic Theology* II, 20 that the absolute One exists beyond the total (πάν), since the total relates to the parts that comprise it by encompassing those parts. Instead, the Absolute One is better called "entire" (ὅλον), a total entity that is not full of parts.[17]

In *Platonic Theology* II, 12, Proclus associates whole and parts with the second triad of the intelligible-intellectual gods.[18] The intelligible triads of the *Parmenides* correspond to the conclusions of the second hypothesis, with the first intelligible triad corresponding to the first conclusion (if the One is, it participates in Being: *Parm.* 142B5–C7—characterised as intelligible essence); the second triad corresponds to the second conclusion: if the One is, it is a totality and it has parts (*Parm.* 142C7–D9—characterised as intelligible life); the third triad corresponds to the third conclusion; if the One is, it is an infinite multiplicity of parts (*Parm.* 142 D 9–143 A 3).[19] Beginning, Middle and End are thus relegated to the second triad of the second hypothesis, which concerns the intelligibles. In *In Parm.* 1061.31–1063.5, a passage attributed to Syrianus (fr. 3 above),[20] the divine classes are given names, such as "totality", "multiplicity"; the names given to the intelligibles in the second hypothesis are precisely those denied of the One, as we see in *In Parm.* 1115.35 ff. Proclus uses the Parmenidean statements concerning which property denied of the One can be attributed to a divine class as it exists in the second hypothesis. These statements, thus, are used by Proclus to outline the world of divine beings.[21]

---

[16] Syrianus cites Plato, *Ep. 2* 312 E.

[17] Proclus, *PT* II, 20, p. 68, 7–13; 71, 7–10; II, 27, 95, 14–16. See Steel (1992) 61.

[18] The other two include *hen on*, *holon*, and *pan*.

[19] Saffrey and Westerink attribute this passage to Syrianus in Proclus, *PT* II, 23–26; in *Sophist* 244B–245B, Plato has expressed the same doctrine of the triads in order to show that the One in itself transcends the summit of Being. Steel discusses this passage in (1992) 62.

[20] Saffrey and Westerink (1978) xlv.

[21] Saffrey and Westerink outline this in (1968) lxix and (1978) xlix. Proclus, following Syrianus, places the metaphysical attributes of the five genera at the intellectual level so

In what will become more clear in the fragments which follow, the different orders of the intelligible contain the five genres of Being; in so far as the *Platonic Theology*[22] and the *Commentary on the Parmenides*[23] discuss the ways in which the One transcends these genres and the second hypothesis affirms them, both texts act as Platonic interpretations of the *Sophist*.

that they do not follow immediately upon the absolute unity of the One. See Van Campe (2009) 262.

[22] Proclus, *PT* I, 11 p. 52 ff.; III, 19, p. 64, 21–65, 13.

[23] Proclus, *In Parm.* 1173.7–1175.29.

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1118.24–1123.16

καὶ μὴν τελευτή γε καὶ ἀρχὴ πέρας ἑκάστου.—πῶς δ' οὔ;—Ἄπειρον ἄρα τὸ ἕν, εἰ μήτε ἀρχὴν μήτε τελευτὴν ἔχει.—Ἄπειρον. [*Parm.* 137d6–8]

Ἡμεῖς δὲ χαρίεντα μὲν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα πάντα νομίζομεν, εἰ καὶ τὰ μὲν μᾶλλον, τὰ δὲ ἧττον ἀποδεχόμεθα, πεισόμεθα δὲ τῷ ἡμετέρῳ καθηγεμόνι, πάνυ γε σφόδρα, καὶ ἐν τούτοις εὐθυβόλως τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος τεθηρακότι διάνοιαν, καὶ ἀξιώσομεν τοὺς τῆς ἀληθείας φιλοθεάμονας ὁρᾷν πρῶτον μὲν πόσαι τάξεις εἰσὶν ἐν τοῖς οὖσι τῆς ἀπειρίας, ἔπειτα ποῖαι ταύταις οἷον ἀντικείμεναι τοῦ πέρατος πρόοδοι, |καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα λοιπὸν ἐπισκέπτεσθαι τί τὸ ἐνταῦθα ἄπειρον· τοῖς γὰρ τὸν τρόπον ἡμῖν[a] τοῦτον μετιοῦσι τὴν τοῦ προκειμένου ζήτησιν ῥᾳδίως ἀναφανήσεται πᾶν τὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος βούλημα.

Τὴν τοίνυν ἀπειρίαν, ἵνα κάτωθεν ποιησώμεθα τὴν ἀρχήν, θεατέον μὲν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ὕλης, διότι ἀόριστος καθ' αὑτὴν καὶ ἄμορφος καὶ ἀνείδεος, τὰ δὲ εἴδη καὶ αἱ μορφαὶ πέρατα τῆς ὕλης. θεατέον [δὲ][b] καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀποίου σώματος κατὰ τὴν διαίρεσιν· ἐπ' ἄπειρον γὰρ τοῦτο πρῶτον διαιρετόν, ἅτε πρῶτον [ὂν][c] διαστατόν. θεατέον δὲ κατὰ τὰς περὶ τὸ ἄποιον[d] πρώτας ὑφισταμένας ποιότητας, ἐν αἷς τὸ μᾶλλόν ἐστι καὶ ἧττον πρώταις· τούτοις γὰρ καὶ ὁ ἐν Φιλήβῳ Σωκράτης ἐχαρακτήρισε τὸ ἄπειρον. θεατέον δὲ[e] καὶ ἐπὶ πάσης τῆς γενέσεως· καὶ γὰρ αὕτη τὸ ἄπειρον ἔχει κατά τε τὴν ἀειγενεσίαν[f] καὶ τὸν ταύτης ἄπαυστον κύκλον, καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἀορίστους τῶν γεννητῶν[g] ἐξαλλαγὰς γιγνομένων ἀεὶ καὶ φθειρομένων, ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡ κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος ἀπειρία τὴν γένεσιν ἔχει ἐν τῷ γίγνεσθαι μόνον οὖσα, πᾶσα δὲ ὁμοῦ[h] μηδέποτε οὖσα.

---

[a] **ἡμῖν** om. A [b] **δὲ** add. Steel ex g (*autem*) [c] **ὂν** add. Steel ex g (*ens*) [d] **ἄποιον** Σ (**ἀπειον** $R^{a'}$) g: **ἄπειρον** A [e] **δὲ** corr. Steel ex g (*autem*): **μὴν** AΣ [f] **ἀειγενεσίαν** Σ: **ἀειγεννησίαν** A [g] **γεννητῶν** corr. Steel ex g (*generabilium*): **γεννητικῶν** AΣ [h] **πᾶσα**….**ὁμοῦ** Strobel: **παραδεόμενον** A^{8} **παραδεομένου** Σ **περιδεομένου** A **περὶ δὲ τὸ ὂν** Westerink | **οὖσα**[2] AΣ g: **λείπουσα** coni. Taylor

"And further, the end and the beginning are the limits of each thing." "Obviously." "So then the One is unlimited, if it has neither beginning nor end." "It is unlimited."

We, however, accept all these suggestions as having a certain attraction, even though we incline to some more than to others; but we are very strongly indeed influenced by our own Master, who in this passage as well has very accurately tracked down the intention of Plato, and we would recommend all lovers of truth to see first how many orders of Unlimitedness there are among beings, then what processions of Limit there are, as it were, set over against these, and after that to turn to the consideration of what Unlimitedness is being referred to here; for if one treats the inquiry into the present question in this way the whole intention of Plato will readily become clear.

Unlimitedness, then, if we start from below, may be reviewed in Matter because it is unlimited and shapeless and formless of itself, whereas the forms and shapes are limits of Matter. It may be seen also in unqualified body in respect of division; for this is the entity which is primally divisible to infinity, in so far as it is the first which is extended. It may also be viewed in the qualities which come into being primally about the Unlimitedness, which are the first things to contain the more and less; for these are the elements by which Socrates in the *Philebus* [24 B][1] characterised the Unlimitedness. It may also be seen throughout the whole of the realm of generation; for this possesses Unlimitedness, both in respect of its constant coming into being and in the ceaseless cycle of this, and in respect of the unlimited exchanges with each other of generated things as they constantly come into being and perish, among which also Unlimitedness in respect of multiplicity has its origin, since it only has existence in the process of coming to being, never attaining true

[1] Proclus cites *Philebus* in his discussion of how God produced beings through a mixture of Limit and Unlimited; see *PT* III, 8.

πρὸ δὲ τούτων τὸ ἄπειρον θεατέον ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κυκλοφορίας· ἔχει γὰρ καὶ αὐτὴ τὸ ἄπειρον διὰ τὴν ἀπειροδυναμίαν τοῦ κινοῦντος· σῶμα μὲν γάρ, καθὸ σῶμα, δύναμιν ἄπειρον οὐκ ἔχει, διὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ νοῦ μετουσίαν καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἀεὶ ἔστι, καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἄπειρος. ἀκατάληκτος γοῦν ἐστι καὶ συνεχὴς τὸ αὐτὸ ποιουμένη τελευτήν τε καὶ ἀρχήν. καὶ πρὸ τούτων ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ ἄπειρον ληπτέον· μεταβατικῶς γὰρ νοοῦσα, δύναμιν ἀπαύστου κινήσεως ἔχει καὶ ἔστιν ἀεικίνητος, συνάπτουσα τὰς περιόδους ἀλλήλαις, καὶ ἄτρυτον ποιουμένη τὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ μίαν ἀεὶ καὶ ἀνέκλειπτον. ἔτι πρὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ χρόνου θεατέον τοῦ μετροῦντος τῆν ψυχικὴν πᾶσαν περίοδον· καὶ γὰρ οὗτός ἐστιν ἄπειρος ὅλος, διότι ἡ ἐνέργεια αὐτοῦ, δι' ἧς ἀνελίττει τὰς κινήσεις τῶν ψυχῶν καὶ δι' ἧς μετρεῖ τὰς περιόδους αὐτῶν, κατ' |ἀριθμὸν ἰοῦσα, ἄπειρός ἐστι κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν· οὐδέποτε γὰρ ἀπολήγει μένουσα καὶ προϊοῦσα, καὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀντεχομένη καὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἀνελίττουσα τὸν τῶν κινήσεων τῶν ὅλων μετρητικόν. ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ χρόνου θέα[a] μοι τὸ ἄπειρον ἐπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ νοῦ καὶ τῆς νοερᾶς ζωῆς· αὕτη γὰρ ἀμετάβατος καὶ ἀεὶ πᾶσα καὶ ἀθρόα πάρεστιν, αἰώνιος δὲ καὶ ἀπειροδύναμος· τὸ γὰρ ἀκίνητον[b] αὐτῆς καὶ ἀνέκλειπτον οὐσίας ἐστὶ καὶ δυνάμεως οὐκ ἐπιλειπούσης, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ τὸ ζῆν ἄγρυπνον ἐχούσης, δι' ἣν καὶ πᾶν τὸ κινούμενον ἀεὶ δύναται ἀεὶ κινεῖσθαι, μετέχον ἐν τῇ κινήσει τῆς ἑστώσης ἀπειρίας. καὶ οὐκ ἄχρι τούτων μόνον[c] τὸ ἄπειρον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ νοῦ πάντως αὐτὸς ὁ πολυύμνητος αἰὼν ἄπειρος, ὃς καὶ πᾶσαν περιέχει τὴν νοερὰν ἀπειρίαν. πόθεν γὰρ τῷ νῷ τὸ αἰωνίως ζῆν ἢ ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος; οὗτος οὖν ἄπειρος πρὸ νοῦ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν· μᾶλλον δὲ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν ἄπειρα, ὁ δὲ αἰὼν δύναμις· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἄλλο τί ἐστιν ἢ δύναμις ὁ πρῶτος αἰών.

ἐπ' αὐτὴν δὴ τὴν πρωτίστην πηγὴν τῆς ἀπειρίας ἀνάδραμε λοιπὸν καὶ τὴν κρύφιον αἰτίαν πάντων τῶν ὁπωσοῦν ἀπείρων γεννητικὴν[d] καὶ ἀναδραμὼν ὄψει πάντα κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν ⟨τὴν⟩[e] ἐκεῖθεν ἄπειρα· τοιοῦτον γάρ, εἰ βούλει, τὸ αὐτοάπειρον· τοιοῦτον παρ' Ὀρφεῖ τὸ χάος, περὶ οὗ καὶ ἐκεῖνος, εἴρηκε τὸ οὐδέ τι πεῖρας ὑπῆν. ὁ μὲν γὰρ αἰὼν, εἰ καὶ διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ ἄπειρος, ἀλλὰ ὡς μέτρον δήπου τῶν αἰωνίων καὶ πέρας ἐστί. τὸ δὲ χάος πρώτως ἄπειρον καὶ μόνως ἄπειρον καὶ πηγὴ πάσης ἀπειρίας, νοητῆς, νοερᾶς, ψυχικῆς, σωματικῆς, ὑλικῆς.

---

[a] **θέα** corr. Steel ex g (*vide*): **θεῶ** ΑΣ [b] **ἀκίνητον** Σg: **ἀεικίνητον** A[1 sl] [c] **μόνον** Σg: **μόνων** A [d] **γεννητικὴν** Dillon: **γεννήσας** ΑΣg (cf. *Theol. plat.* V 22, p. 81.2). [e] **τὴν**[2] add. Steel, *que* add. g (**τὰ Γ**?)

existence. And prior to these the Unlimitedness may be observed in the circuits of the heavens; for it also possesses Unlimitedness by reason of the unlimited power of that which moves it; for body, in so far as it is body, does not have unlimited power but through the presence in it of intellect even body exists eternally, and its motion is unlimited; it is unceasing and continuous, having the same thing as its beginning and end. Prior to these again, the Unlimitedness may be perceived in the Soul, for as it thinks transitively, it possesses the power of unceasing motion and is eternally mobile, joining its circuits one to the other and producing an activity which is unwearied and always one and unfailing. Further, prior to Soul, the Unlimitedness may be perceived in the case of Time itself, which measures the whole circuit of the Soul; for this is limitless as a whole because its activity, through which it unfolds the motions of souls and through which it measures their circuits as it proceeds according to number, is unlimited in its power; for it never stops resting and going forward, both clinging fast to the One, and unfolding Number, which measures the motions of all things. But indeed, even prior to Time, behold the Infinite in Intellect itself and intellectual life; for this is non-transient and always a totality and present as a whole and eternal and infinite in power; its immobility and unfailing continuity is a mark of an essence and power which does not give out, but always preserves unsleeping life, through which also everything that is in motion is able always to move, participating through its motion in stable Infinity. And the Unlimitedness does not extend only as far as these, but also, prior to Intellect, the much-celebrated Eternity itself is necessarily infinite, seeing that it comprehends the whole intellectual infinity. For whence would Intellect derive its eternal life, if not from Eternity? So then this is Unlimitedness, prior to Intellect, in respect of power; or rather all the things are infinite in power, but Eternity is power itself; for indeed the primal Eternity is nothing else than Power.

Ascend then to the primal fount of Infinity, and the hidden cause generative of all other infinite things of whatever kind, and when you have thus ascended you will see that all things are infinite in respect of power from that source. For such, if you will, is Essential Infinity; such is what is termed by Orpheus "chaos", about which he himself has said, "Nor was there any bound beneath it" [*OF* 52 Kern]. For Eternity, even if it is unlimited in respect of everlastingness, nevertheless as being the measure of things eternal is also a limit; chaos on the other hand is primally unlimited and solely unlimited, and is the fount of all Infinity—intelligible, intellectual, psychic, corporeal, or material.

ὁρᾷς οὖν ὅσαι τάξεις τῆς ἀπειρίας καὶ ὡς ἀεὶ αἱ δεύτεραι τῶν πρὸ αὐτῶν ἐξήρτηνται· ἥ τε γὰρ ὑλικὴ ἀπειρία συνέχεται διὰ τῆς ἀειγενεσίας, ἥ τε ἀειγενεσία διὰ τὴν ἀεικινησίαν τοῦ αἰθέρος ἐστὶν ἀνέκλειπτος, καὶ ἡ ἀεικινησία τοῦ αἰθέρος διὰ τὴν τῆς θείας ψυχῆς ἄπαυστον περίοδον ἀποτελεῖται· μίμημα γάρ ἐστιν ἐκείνης, καὶ ἡ ταύτης περίοδος διὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου συνεχῆ καὶ ἀνέκλειπτον δύναμιν ἀνελίττεται, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀρχὴν ποιουμένη καὶ τελευτὴν διὰ τὸ νῦν τὸ χρονικόν, καὶ ὁ χρόνος ἀπείρως ἐνεργεῖ διὰ τὴν νοερὰν ἀπειρίαν τὴν ἀεὶ ἑστῶσαν· τὸ γὰρ κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἰόν, ὅταν ἄπειρον ᾖ, διὰ τὴν μένουσαν ἀεὶ αἰτίαν ἄπειρον, περὶ ἣν ἀνελίττεται τοῦτο καὶ ἣν ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως περιχορεύει. καὶ ὁ νοῦς ἐπ' ἄπειρον ζῇ διὰ τὸν αἰῶνα· τὸ γὰρ αἰώνιον πᾶσιν ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος, καὶ οὗτός ἐστιν ὅθεν ἐξήρτηται πᾶσι, τοῖς μὲν ⟨ἐναργέστερον, τοῖς δὲ⟩[a] ἀμυδρότερον, τὸ εἶναί τε καὶ ζῆν. καὶ ὁ αἰὼν ἄπειρος διὰ τὴν πηγὴν τῆς ἀπειρίας, ἣ καὶ οὐσίαις πάσαις καὶ δυνάμεσι καὶ ἐνεργείαις καὶ περιόδοις καὶ γενέσεσιν ἄνωθεν χορηγεῖ τὸ ἀνέκλειπτον. καὶ μέχρι ταύτης ἀνιοῦσι καὶ ἀπὸ ταύτης κατιοῦσιν αἱ τῶν ἀπειρῶν τάξεις·[b] καὶ γὰρ ἡ τῶν καλῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοκάλλους, καὶ ἡ τῶν ἰσοτήτων ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἰσότητος, [ὥσ][c]τε καὶ ἡ τῶν ἀπειριῶν ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτοαπειρίας.

Ἀλλὰ περὶ μὲν τῶν τοῦ ἀπείρου τάξεων εἰρήσθω τοσαῦτα. τὴν δὲ τοῦ πέρατος σειρὰν ταύτῃ συμπροϊοῦσαν ἄνωθεν ἐπισκεπτέον· δύο γὰρ ταύτας αἰτίας ἅμα παρήγαγεν ὁ θεὸς, πέρας καὶ ἄπειρον, ἢ εἰ βούλει λέγειν ἡμᾶς Ὀρφικῶς· αἰθέρα καὶ χάος. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἄπειρον χάος ἐστὶν, ὡς χορηγὸν[d] πάσης δυνάμεως καὶ πάσης ἀπειρίας καὶ ὡς περιληπτικὸν τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ οἷον τῶν ἀπείρων τὸ ἀπειρότατον· τὸ δὲ πέρας ὁ αἰθήρ, ὅτι καὶ οὗτος ὁ αἰθὴρ τὰ πάντα περατοῖ καὶ μετρεῖ. πρῶτον οὖν πέρας τὸ αὐτοπέρας· πηγὴ ⟨γὰρ⟩[e] καὶ ἑστία[f] πάντων ἐστὶ

[a] **ἐναργέστερον**… **δὲ** add. Cous[2] (cf. *In Parm.* III 803.3–4) [b] **αἱ**… **τάζεις** corr. Steel ex g (*ordines*): **ἡ**… **τάξις** ΑΣ [c] **ὥστε** corr. Steel ex g (*quare*): **τε** Σ om. A [d] **χορηγὸν** corr. Steel ex g (*elargitiuum*): **χορητικὸν** ΑΣ **χωρητικὸν** Cous. [e] **γὰρ** add. Strobel [f] **ἑστία** corr. Strobel ex g (*origo*): **στίγμα** ΑΣ **στήριγμα** Taylor

You see, then, how many orders of Infinity there are, and how in each case the secondary depend upon those prior to them; for material unlimitedness is held together through eternal generation, while eternal generation is unfailing by reason of the eternal motion of the aether, and the eternal motion of the aether is brought about by the unceasing circuit of the divine Soul; for it is an imitation of that entity, and the circuit of the Soul is unfolded through the continuous and unfailing power of Time, which makes the same things to be beginning and end by means of the temporal present, and Time exercises its activity without Limit by virtue of the unlimitedness of Intellect, which is always static; for that which proceeds according to Intellect, when it is infinite, is infinite by virtue of an eternally static cause, around which this unfolds itself and about which it performs its eternally uniform dance. And Intellect possesses eternal life by virtue of Eternity; for eternity comes to all things from Eternity, and it is this on which all depend, some more manifestly, others more obscurely, for their being and life; and Eternity is infinite by virtue of the fount of infinity, which from above provides unfailingness to all essences and powers and activities and circuits and generations. Up to this, then, there ascends, and from this there descends, the orders of things infinite; for even as the order of things beautiful descends from Essential Beauty, and the order of things equal from Primal Equality, even so the order of things infinite descends from Essential Infinity.

Enough has now been said about the orders of infinity. We must next turn to examine the chain of Limit which proceeds parallel with this. For these two causal principles were produced simultaneously by God—Limit and Unlimitedness, or, if you wish us to express them in Orphic terms, Aether and Chaos.[2] For the infinite is Chaos, in so far as it is receptive of every power and every type of Unlimitedness, and in so far as it encircles everything else, and is as it were the most infinite of all things infinite. Aether is Limit because this (visible) aether too limits and measures all things. The primary limit is Essential Limit, the fount

[2] Syrianus uses the Orphic principles of Aether and Chaos to express how all of reality is derived from the countering principles which exist as a dyad after the One. See Syrianus, *In Met*. 182.22–24; 9.37–10.7 and Proclus, *In Tim*. I, 176.23–177.2; 385.9–21; *PT* III, 8, 30.15–23. Cf. D'Ancona (1992) 274. The principles of *peras* and *apeiria* were revealed by Orpheus to Pythagoras, by Pythagoras to Plato. The key passage for *peras* and *apeiria* in the thought of Syrianus occurs in *In Met*. p. 165.33–166.6. See D'Ancona (2000) 216. On Syrianus invoking theological authorities on numbers, see O'Meara (1989) 137. See also Iamblichus, *In Tim*. Fr. 7 Dillon, where Limit and Unlimitedness are a dyad immediately following the One.

τῶν περάτων, νοητῶν, νοερῶν, ὑπερκοσμίων, ἐγκοσμίων, μέτρον αὐτὸ τῶν πάντων καὶ ὅρος προϋπάρχον. δεύτερον δὲ τὸ κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα· αἰὼν γὰρ ὁμοῦ καὶ ἄπειρός| ἐστιν, ὡς εἴρηται, καὶ πέρας· καθὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀνεκλείπτου ζωῆς ἐστιν αἴτιος καὶ ὡς δύναμις τοῦ ἀεὶ χορηγός, ἄπειρός ἐστι· καθὸ δὲ μέτρον ἐστὶ πάσης νοερᾶς ἐνεργείας καὶ ὅρος τῆς τοῦ νοῦ ζωῆς ἄνωθεν αὐτὴν ὁρίζων, πέρας ἐστί· καὶ ὅλως καὶ αὐτὸς τῶν μικτῶν ἐστι τῶν ἐκ πέρατος καὶ ἀπειρίας ὑφισταμένων, ὅθεν αὐτὸν οὔτε τὸ πρώτως ⟨πέρας οὔτε τὸ πρώτως⟩[a] ἄπειρον λέγειν ἠξιοῦμεν· τὸ γὰρ πρώτως ἑκατέρου ἐξῄρηται τῶν μικτῶν πάντων, ὥς φησιν ὁ ἐν τῷ Φιλήβῳ Σωκράτης.

τρίτον τοίνυν τὸ πέρας ἐν τῷ νῷ θεατέον· καθὸ γὰρ ἐν ταὐτῷ μένει κατὰ τὴν νόησιν, καὶ μίαν καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει ζωήν, ὥρισται καὶ πεπέρασται· τὸ γὰρ ἀμετάβατον καὶ τὸ ἑστὼς πεπερασμένης ἐστὶ φύσεως· καὶ ὅλως ἀριθμὸς ὢν δηλονότι ταύτῃ μετέχει τοῦ πέρατος. τέταρτον τοίνυν ὁ χρόνος πέρας, καὶ ὡς κατ' ἀριθμὸν προϊών, καὶ ὡς μέτρον τῶν ψυχικῶν περιόδων· πανταχοῦ γὰρ τὸ μετροῦν, καθὸ μετρεῖ, καὶ τὸ ἀφορίζον τὰ ἄλλα, τῆς τοῦ πέρατος αἰτίας μετέχον, μετρητικόν ἐστιν αὐτῶν καὶ ἀφοριστικόν. πέμπτον ἐπὶ τούτοις ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς περίοδος, καὶ ὁ κύκλος ὡσαύτως ἀποτελούμενος μέτρον ἐστὶν ἀφανὲς πασῶν τῶν φαινομένων κινήσεων· ἀπὸ γὰρ τῆς ζωτικῆς περιφορᾶς ὁρίζεται πᾶσα τῶν ἑτεροκινήτων ἡ ἀνέλιξις.

ἕκτον ἡ κατὰ ταὐτὰ[b] καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τοῦ αἰθέρος κίνησις περατοῖ πανταχόθεν τὸ ἄτακτον τῶν ἐνύλων καὶ εἰς ἕνα συνελίττει κύκλον καὶ αὐτὴ καθ' ἑαυτὴν ὥρισται· τὸ γὰρ ἄπειρον αὐτῆς ἐν τῷ πάλιν καὶ πάλιν ἐστὶν, ἀλλ' οὐ τῷ μὴ ἀνακάμπτειν, οὐδὲ οἷα κατ' εὐθεῖαν ἄπειρον, οὐδ' ὡς ἐστερημένον πέρατος κἀνταῦθα τὸ ἄπειρον· ἡ γὰρ μία περίοδος τῷ πολλάκις ἐστὶν ἄπειρος. ἕβδομον ἡ ἀνέκλειπτος τῶν εἰδῶν ὑπόστασις, τῶν ἐνύλων λέγω, καὶ τῷ μηδὲν τῶν ὅλων ἀπολλύσθαι καὶ τῷ πάντα ὡρίσθαι· τὰ μὲν [γὰρ] καθ' ἕκαστα τοῖς κοινοῖς, τὰ δὲ μέρη τοῖς ὅλοις, δείκνυσι τὴν ἐνταῦθα τοῦ πέρατος πρὸς τὸ ἄπειρον ἀντίθεσιν· ἀπειραχῶς γὰρ ἐξαλλαττομένων τῶν γεννητῶν, ὅμως ὥρισται τὰ εἴδη καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ διαμένει, μήτε πλείω μήτε

[a] **πέρας**… **πρώτως** add. Steel [b] **ταὐτὰ** corr. Steel ex g (*eadem*): **ταῦτα** ΑΣ

and hearth of all limits, intelligible, intellectual, supracosmic, encosmic, preexisting itself as the measure and bound of all things. The second limit is that associated with Eternity; for Eternity is simultaneously both Unlimitedness, as it has been said, and Limit; in so far as it is the cause of unfailing life and the power which bestows everlastingness, it is Unlimitedness; inasmuch as it is the measure of all intellectual activity and the bound of the life of intellect, bounding it from above, it is Limit. And in general it is one of those mixed entities which are formed of Limit and Unlimitedness, for which reason we do not see fit to call it ⟨either the primal Limit or⟩ the primarily Unlimited; for that which is primarily anything is transcendent over either of every pair of all mixed entities, as Socrates says in the *Philebus* [23 C].

The third class of Limit is to be seen in Intellect; for in so far as it remains in itself in virtue of its intellection and possesses a life which is single and eternal and the same, it is bounded and limited; for that which is non-transitive and static belongs to the limited nature, and in general in that it is a number it plainly in this respect partakes of limit. Fourthly, Time is Limit, both in so far as it proceeds according to number, and in so far as it is the measure of the circuits of the soul; for everywhere the measuring element, in so far as it measures, and that which sets bounds to other things, partakes of the causal principle of Limit and is a measuring and limiting element of other things. Fifth after these comes the circuit of the Soul, and its cycle as it is uniformly completed, which is an invisible measure of all visible motions; for it is on the basis of the circuit of life that all the unfolding of those things which are moved by an external agency is given definition.

The sixth form of Limit is the motion of the aether on the same terms and in the same place and about the same centre, which bestows Limit from all aspects upon the disorderly element in material things, and rolls them together in one cycle and is itself limited by itself; for its unlimited element consists in its happening again and again, but not in its not turning back on itself, nor on the grounds that it is unlimited in one direction, nor does Unlimitedness here too consist in the fact that it is devoid of Limit; but the single circuit is unlimited in that it occurs many times. Seventh is the unfailing creation of the forms in matter, and the fact that nothing of all things perishes, and the fact that all things are bounded, individual things by common terms, parts by their wholes. All this shows in this realm the opposition of Limit and Unlimitedness; for although generated things alter in unlimited ways, nevertheless their forms are limited and persist the same, becoming neither more nor less.

ἐλάττω γιγνόμενα. ὄγδοον καλείσθω πέρας τὸ ποσὸν πᾶν ἰδίως ἐν τοῖς ὑλικοῖς, καθάπερ τὸ ποιὸν ἐλέγετο πρότερον ἄπειρον· οὐ γὰρ ἐπιδέχεται τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ ἧττον, ὡς καὶ ἐν Φιλήβῳ λέγει Σωκράτης. ἔνατον ⟨τὸ⟩[a] ἄποιον σῶμα ὡς ὅλον πέρας ἐστίν· οὐ γάρ ἐστι κατὰ μέγεθος ἄπειρον, ἀλλὰ τοσοῦτον ὅσον τὸ πᾶν· δεῖ γὰρ ὅλον ὑποκείμενον αὐτὸ λέγεσθαι τοῦ παντός. δέκατον αὐτὸ τὸ ἔνυλον εἶδος, ὃ κατέχει τὴν ὕλην καὶ περιορίζει τὸ ἀόριστον αὐτῆς καὶ ἄμορφον, εἰς ὃ καὶ ἀπιδόντες τινὲς μόνον εἰς ὕλην καὶ εἶδος ἀνάγουσι τό τε πέρας καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον. τοσαῦται μὲν οὖν καὶ αἱ τοῦ πέρατος τάξεις· ὡς συλλήβδην γὰρ εἰπεῖν, τούτων πολλὰς θεωρήσομεν διαφορότητας.

[a] **τὸ** add. Steel.

Commentary

In this fragment, we see how Syrianus develops the system of Platonic principles, in which reality results from the conjunction of two contrary principles, Limit and Unlimitedness.[4] Proclus seems to adopt Syrianus' view in its entirety, as a solution to the problem of how multiplicity derives from the One.[5] Proclus divides Syrianus' solution to the problem into two sections, with a third section based on Syrianus' teaching, but coming from Proclus:

1. 1119.4–1121.21: the classes of Unlimitedness
2. 1121.22–1123.21: the processions of Limit
3. 1123.22–1124.37: solution of the exegetical question

For the first two sections, Proclus shows how Syrianus divides the universe into levels of Limit and Unlimitedness. Syrianus runs through all the levels of the universe to show how the aporia is seen at every level.

[4] On the development of this doctrine from Plato to Aristotle to the late Platonists, see Merlan (1965) 150 for a discussion of Syrianus' use of Aristotle and the doctrine of dualism. According to D'Ancona, Syrianus uses the monism of Pythagoreans paired with the dualism of Aristotelian principles. See D'Ancona (2000) 197 ff.

[5] Proclus, *ET*, props. 89 and 90.

As an eighth type of Limit let us mention all quantity as it particularly appears in material things, even as quality was previously stated to be unlimited; for it does not allow of the more and less, as Socrates says in the *Philebus* [24 B]. Ninthly, unqualified body as a whole is Limit; for it is not unlimited in size, but it is of the same extent as the universe; for it must as a whole be said to be the substratum of the universe. A tenth type of Limit is the form[3] in matter itself, which holds together matter and bounds its boundlessness and shapelessness, and it is this, indeed, solely that some people think of when they refer Limit and Unlimitedness to matter and form alone. So many, then, are the orders of Limit; to sum up, we shall see many different characteristics of these.

[3] The creation of Forms in Matter was dealt with at the seventh level, but to get ten levels in total (an important number in Pythagorean numerology/cosmology), Syrianus brings in Form in Matter here "in itself".

This section of the *Parmenides Commentary* begins with Proclus denying Limit to the One (1116.21 ff.). He first addresses how the One's lack of Limit depends on it having no beginning, middle and end.[6] In the passage being addressed here, Proclus, following Syrianus, sets out how Limit and Unlimitedness exist at every level of reality. Here, he elaborates on Plato's argument in the *Philebus*, which regards Limit and Unlimitedness as existing in the Forms and acting as the ultimate elements of things.[7] Syrianus describes the hierarchy of the universe with respect to the principles of Limit and Unlimitedness,[8] particularly with respect to

[6] See Syrianus, *In Parm*. fr. 4 Wear.

[7] Proclus, *In Tim*. II, p. 19.23–160.7.

[8] The concept of Sameness and Otherness as two principles upon which the universe is built finds its roots in the Pythagorean *peras* and *apeiria*. In their introduction to Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Introduction to Arithmetic*, Robbins and Karpinski give a brief history of the two principles (1926) 99–102. Nicomachus gives his statement on sameness and otherness in II. 18.1: "Regarding the solid numbers, this is for the present sufficient. The physical philosophers, however, and those that take their start with mathematics, call the 'Same' and 'the Other' the principles of the universe, and it has been shown that the 'Same' inheres in unity and the odd numbers, to which unity gives specific form, and to an even greater degree in the square, made by the continued addition of odd numbers, because in their sides they share in equality; while the 'other' inheres in two and whole even series, which is given specific form by two, and particularly in the hectometric numbers, which are made by the continued addition of the even numbers, because of the

the various ways Limit and Unlimitedness are used at various levels of the universe. It seems from his description that *peras* and *apeiria* are features of the henadic world that filter down in the universe—both exist at every level.[9] This concept relates back to Iamblichus' theory of *peras* and *apeiria* as two principles extending through the entire universe, located after the second One:

> "For since all things derive both from the One and from the Dyad after the One and are united in a way with each other, and have been allotted an antithetical nature, so also in the major categories of Being there is a certain antithesis of the Same as against the Other, and of Motion as opposed to Rest, and all things that are in the cosmos partake of these classes, it would indeed be suitable to consider the conflict as extending through all things."[10]

This passage parallels one in Syrianus' *In Metaph.* 112, 14:

> Ἔλεγον μεν οἱ ἄνδρες μετά τὴν τῶν πάντων ἀρχήν, ἣν τἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ ὑπερούσιον ἕν ἠξίουν καλεῖν, δύο εἶναι τῶν ὅλων αἰτίας, μόναδα καὶ τὴν ἀπειροδύναμον δυάδα, καὶ ταύτας τὰς ἀρχὰς καθ' ἑκάστην τῶν ὄντων τάξιν οἰκείως ἀπετίθεντο.

Syrianus places a monad (here, Limit) after the One, followed by a dyad (Unlimitedness). Syrianus' doctrine of Limit and Unlimitedness differs from Iamblichus' with respect to his use of the terms "monad" and "dyad". While Syrianus makes Limit—the principle of unity—a monad, and Unlimitedness—governed by multiplicity—a dyad, Iamblichus postulates the second One of the intelligible world as the monad, with the dyad being Limit and Unlimitedness following the monad as a pair. Sheppard points out a difficulty with respect to Proclus' use of terminology for Limit and Unlimitedness in her article, "Monad and Dyad as Cosmic Principles in Syrianus." She notes that, depending on the text, Proclus sometimes uses "dyad" referring to the pair of principles together; other times, he speaks of *peras* as "monad", *apeiria* as "dyad".[11]

---

share of the original inequality and 'otherness' which they have in the difference between their sides."

[9] D'Ancona argues that Limit and Unlimitedness interact with the henads in two different ways: sometimes the henads are subordinated to Limit and Unlimitedness, in which case they act as the supreme principles of the intelligible world; other times they are independent from it, transcending otherness, and as such they act as the fundamental elements of the intelligible world. See (1992).

[10] Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 82, 11 ff. (= Iamblichus, *In Tim.* Fr. 7 Dillon). Trans. Dillon.

[11] Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 175.2 ff. (esp. I, 176.11–12): Proclus uses "dyad" of *peras* and *apeiria* together and of *apeiria*, as opposed to *peras* (implying that *peras* is a monad). In

Syrianus' commentary on *peras* and *apeiria* responds to the aporia at the end of 1118, which asks in what sense the One is unlimited. Here, the One is a limiting agent, regarded as the measure of measures which comprehends both time and eternity.[12] Next, he addresses how the One has no limit because it exists outside the chain of Limit and Unlimitedness. Proclus gives three ways in which the One is unlimited, according to commentators:

1. It is untransversable by us; it is the limit of everything else. The One is: 1) incomprehensible; 2) unencompassable by all ascending to it.[13] (1118.9)
2. It is infinite in power:[14] the power of the One extends throughout the universe. (1118.19–25)
3. Intellect is Limit; One is above Intellect, so they have termed it Unlimitedness. One is also motionless; Soul is motion, above soul. (1118.25–33)

Proclus does not give much credit to any of these opinions. While the theories attempt to explain the power of the One by showing how it is responsible for multiplicity while remaining unified, they leave the One open to degradation. Syrianus innovates here, by coming up with the solution that two principles placed immediately after the One (Limit and Unlimitedness) draw intelligible multiplicity from the One without exposing the One to multiplicity.

In 1118.31–1124.15, Proclus lists Syrianus' levels of Infinity and Limit, which he seems to adopt without correction. Syrianus runs through the ten levels of Limit and Unlimitedness by moving from the lowest point of Unlimitedness to the highest, and then from the highest point of Limit

---

the *Platonic Theology*, Proclus refers to the principles as *peras* and *apeiria*, and refers to them as a pair using "dyad." Sheppard further points out that Syrianus, in his *Metaphysics Commentary*, uses ἀπειροδύναμος δυάς for *apeiria*. See Sheppard on this and on Proclus' terminology for Limit and Unlimitedness (1982) 6. Sheppard attributes the difference in terminology to the subject matter of the texts being interpreted.

[12] Plato *Laws* 716 C.

[13] Plotinus criticises this view; see Plotinus, *Enn*. VI. 96 and *Anon*. 120.

[14] Possibly stems from Aristotle's notion of the infinite, incorporeal power of the prime mover as it is extended to the finite heavens. See Proclus, *ET* prop. 96, where the potency of a finite body is never infinite. The first recorded use of *apeirodynamis* is by Porphyry (*Sent*. 37, p. 43.9 Lamberz), who uses it of soul. Dillon notes that Porphyry also describes *to ontôs on* as *apeiron kai adiexitêton* (1988) 39.10–11. Still, he does not use it of the One. Dillon concludes that this commentator is most likely Iamblichus, see (1987) 461, note 97. See Dillon (1988) 33.

to the lowest.[15] Every grade of reality is infinite in potency. For instance, Unlimitedness exists in matter; an unqualified body can be infinitely divided and so is unlimited, as the infinitely extensive is unlimited. At the level of physical body, physical number is infinite. With respect to Soul and time, Syrianus discusses the way in which Soul thinks discursively, so it is eternally mobile, and Time unfolds Soul and proceeds according to number, hence it is unlimited in power. Syrianus' metaphysical mode of Time and Eternity are thus Iamblichean. Here, he places Time above Soul, at the limit of the noeric world—this is the metaphysical place granted by Iamblichus, which Proclus also later copies. Syrianus hypostasises Time and makes it the condition of Soul. While Iamblichus makes Time the life of the Soul (Soul falls away from Intellect and thinks discursively—this quality of Soul is Time), Syrianus holds that Time is its own entity, not just a quality of soul. At the level of the intellect and intellectual life (νοερᾶς ζωῆς), the ranks of Unlimitedness begin with matter and work their way to Infinity itself, while the description of Limit begins at the highest rank (Limit) and works its way down.

According to Proclus, everything contains a mixture of Limit and Unlimitedness,[16] with the exception of primitive Limit and Unlimitedness, because the first manifestation is said to be free from other characteristics.[17] Infinite is "chaos"—in Orphic terms—because it is receptive of every power and limitation, while Limit imposes measure on all things visible and invisible. Limit and Unlimitedness reveal two natures of the One—the One as a perfect, transcendent entity and the One as the cause of all things. In his description of principles, he sets forth that all being descends from the two principles and that the two principles pervade being.[18] Syrianus begins his discussion of Unlimitedness with matter and works his way upward to Unlimitedness in itself, while in his description of Limit, he begins with Limit in itself and works down to matter. The chart below re-configures the descriptions so they run parallel, with every level coinciding except for the extreme terms—Unlimitedness in itself and Limit in itself:

[15] We may suspect Syrianus here of seeking the perfect Pythagorean number of levels.

[16] Proclus, *ET* prop. 89.

[17] Proclus, *ET* prop. 90; *PT* III, 8. Proclus credits the *Philebus* and Philolaus with the concept that beings result from a mixture of Limit and Unlimitedness.

[18] Proclus, *In Remp*. I, p. 96, 17–23; *In Tim*. p. 47, 4–7; p. 130. 13–15, p. 385. 9–12; *In Met*. p. 30. 10–12.

Rank	*Unlimit (Chaos)*	*Limit (Aether)*
Matter	formless of itself	forms and shapes are limits of matter[19]
Unqualified Body	divisible to infinity	limited in size; body as a whole is limited
Qualities	contain more and less	quantity is limited in material things
Realm of generation	constant coming into being and ceaseless cycle	creation of forms in matter; nothing of all things perishes (forms continue)
circuits of heaven	possesses unlimited power of that which moves it; happens continuously	places limit upon the disorderly elements in matter; turns back on itself and limits itself
Soul[20]	power of unceasing motion	circuits of the soul are uniform
Time	measures whole circuit of the soul—power which unfolds circuits of the soul is unlimited	proceeds according to number; measure of the circuits of the soul
Intellect[21]	eternal motion and unfailing continuity[22]	remains in itself; its life is single and eternal and same
Eternity[23]	comprehends the whole intellectual infinity. It is power itself	Measure of all intellectual activity and bound of the life of intellect (mixed entity, formed of Limit and Unlimitedness)
Infinity/Essential Limt[24]	fount of all infinity[25]	foundation of all limits

[19] Proclus, *ET* prop. 94. Spatial infinity exists because infinite body may be divisible at any point.

[20] Proclus, *PT* VI, p. 33: soul depends on Limit, because it measures its own life by periods; because it never stops moving, it is Unlimitedness.

[21] Proclus, *PT* VI, p. 33: intellect is limit in so far as it is uniform and total, it produces all things eternally—as intelligible measure it participates in limit; as essential power, it participates in Unlimitedness.

[22] Infinitude in the intelligible world receives diversity of forms (is analogous to matter); cf. Plotinus, *Enn*. II.4.15; Dodds (1963) 247.

[23] Proclus, *In Tim*. I, 385.17—Essential Infinity, *OF* 52.

[24] Αὐτομονάς and αὐτοδύας are used in *In Met*. 112.14 to refer to the supreme dyad in relation to numbers. See Sheppard (1982) 4.

[25] Proclus, *ET* prop. 92—Infinite descends from Essential Infinity. αὐτοαπειριά is neither the first principle nor Being, but between the two. Proclus, *ET* prop. 90: prior to all that is composed of Limit and Infinitude there exists substantially First Limit and First Infinity.

Limit is static, non-transitive, and all adjectives that can be said of a unified, unchanging principle. Syrianus makes use of the previous objection that the One has no limit, but gives limit to everything else.[26] Last on the chart is the transcendent Limit and Unlimitedness—the uncoordinated principles whence all divine beings first process. So, it seems the first two principles of beings exist in themselves as causes of the universe before un-participated Being and mixtures which constitute beings.[27] While the two, moreover, seem of parallel strength in this fragment, Syrianus argues that *peras* is superior to *apeiria* because it is more similar to the transcendent One in a number of passages in Proclus.[28] What Syrianus leaves out in his study, however, is a detailed discussion of just how the two principles work at every level of reality.[29]

Syrianus' enumeration of Limit and Unlimitedness as they exist at various levels of being occurs in *Platonic Theology* III 8, p. 33.3–34.11. Here, Proclus mentions six terms, as opposed to the ten terms listed in this fragment, and does not distinguish between Limit and Unlimitedness in his enumeration of the levels of being:[30]

1. Eternity
2. Nous
3. Soul
4. the entire universe
5. the entire creation
6. form and matter[31]

The extreme terms have been omitted (Limit and Unlimitedness), as has the rank of time and body. Such an enumeration of levels is also found in *In Met.* 6.6–19, where Syrianus sets out the following five levels:

---

[26] Plato, *Laws* IV 16 E.

[27] Proclus, *PT* III, 8.

[28] D'Ancona lists the following: Proclus, *In Tim.* I, p. 175.25–176; p. 176.24–27; p. 182.14–20; p. 385.17–386.13; II, p. 78.12–16; p. 78.19–79.4; p. 262.21–34; *In Parm.* II, 738.18–34; 741.3–9; IV, 849.13–15; VI,1123.22–1124.6; *PT* III, 8, p. 32.28–33.2; IV, 29, p. 85.11–16; 30 p. 94.9–21. See (2000) 216, note 85.

[29] Luna (2000) 259.

[30] Luna discusses this passage in (2000) 60.

[31] Matter imitates the last of Unlimited. In *In Met.* p. 174.11–17, Syrianus affirms that matter is an image of the indefinite dyad. Proclus discusses the relationship between matter and form and form and limit in *PT* III, 8–10. Form and matter imitate the principles, with form imitating Limit and Matter, Unlimited. Cf. Syrianus, *In Met.* p. 48.25–26; Luna explains that matter and form play, in the universe of becoming, the same role as the principles play at the level of intelligibles (2000) 263.

1. the entire Intellect and divine realm
2. the psychic essence
3. the physis of all things
4. heaven
5. creation

τὸ αὐτοπέρας is the superior to ἡ αὐτοαπειρία because it displays unitary properties similar to the One's unity. It is the supreme principle above all unity[32]—everything has Limit, except for the One, which is situated above it and matter, which is below it.[33] ἡ αὐτοαπειρία is the transcendent source of all plurality.[34] While the uniformity of Limit is said to maintain the universe, Unlimitedness marks the beginning of procession from the One which culminates in a generative series that is the universe.[35] Only the Infinite is absolutely infinite, for each grade of reality is said to be infinite in potency, according to Proclus.[36] By "infinity in potency", Proclus means that while it has a limit, its content is never exhausted, a notion he adopts from Syrianus, who inherits it from predecessors, such as Porphyry.[37]

Proclus describes Limit and Unlimitedness as a relationship akin to the one between substance and potency. Intelligibles, thus, contain an infinite active potency, an infinite potency of becoming (in the realm of soul, heaven, animate and inanimate and material species), an infinite variability and infinite divisibility of body; pure passive potentiality is marked by indefiniteness and relates to pure matter. In *Elements of Theology* proposition 159, Proclus places the τὸ αὐτοπέρας and ἡ αὐτοαπειρία immediately after the One, a view which differs from Syrianus', who encapsulates *peras* and *apeiria* in the broader terms of monad and dyad. Syrianus, however, differs from other philosophers in so far as his monad and dyad, while conferring sameness and otherness on the universe, do not generate the universe. Still, these differences are minor.

Monad and Dyad exist in the universe after the single principle of all existence, and they reappear at every level of existence. Syrianus makes his most extensive discussion on the topic in his critique of Aristotle's

[32] Proclus, *ET* prop. 132.
[33] Proclus, *ET* prop. 93.
[34] Proclus, *ET* prop. 92.
[35] Proclus, *PT* III, 8, p. 32.
[36] Proclus, *ET* prop. 93.
[37] Syrianus, *In Met.* 14.14 and Porphyry, *Sent.* xxxi.

Metaphysics, books *M* and *N*. The best statement on this matter occurs *In Met*. 112.14 ff.:

> For these men (sc. The Platonists) said that after the first cause of all things was the Good and transcendent One, and they see fit to call it the One above being, while as second of the causes among the wholes, they established the Monad and the Dyad of infinite potentiality and they established these as *archai* in each rank of beings. For that which is analogous to the Good is present in every order of existence, and also those things akin to the first monad and dyad. (*In Met*. 112.14 ff.)

In this section of the commentary on *Metaphysics*, Syrianus discusses *Met*. M 1097a.15, regarding Aristotle's views on the Platonic Forms. The essential Monad (*archike monas*) is the principle responsible for sameness, unity and eternal life, while lower principles, corresponding to the monad, make all things one. The Dyad is responsible for production, procession, and plurality while other levels of dyad are required for multiplicity at every level.[38] In "Monad and Dyad as Cosmic Principles in Syrianus", Sheppard notes that Syrianus does not always distinguish between the transcendent One and the Monad, placing emphasis instead on the difference between the One (or Monad) and the Dyad of infinite power (*apeirodunamos dyas*).[39] It seems that it is Proclus who takes Syrianus' terms of Monad and Dyad and refers to them as *peras* and *apeiria*. Syrianus, on the other hand, uses these terms in *In Met*. 10.2 ff. and 165.33 ff. for principles discussed by the other philosophers, including the Orphic pair of aether and chaos.[40] The principle of the *mikton* is added to these, as Proclus uses terminology from the *Philebus* to reconfigure Syrianus' principles of the Monad and Dyad. Sheppard attributes this different vocabulary to the nature of texts being commented upon—Syrianus comments upon Aristotle's Monad and Dyad *in Met*. *M* and *N*, whereas Proclus, commenting on Plato's *Parmenides*, uses Platonic language.[41] Proclus, moreover, uses the term "dyad" to refer to *peras* and *apeiria* as opposed to the monad[42] in the *Platonic Theology*[43] and *Elements of Theology*;[44] however, the pair of principles is called *peras* and *apeiria* in the *Parmenides Commentary*.

---

[38] Sheppard (1982) 3.
[39] Sheppard (1982) 4.
[40] Sheppard (1982) 5.
[41] Proclus, *In Tim*. I, 176.11–12 uses "dyad" ambiguously.
[42] Sheppard (1982) 6.
[43] Proclus, *PT* III, 8, p. 34, 16.
[44] Proclus, *ET* prop. 89, 93, 159.

The place of matter in this system is worth noting, as the Monad and Dyad affect it in special ways. The discussion on the infinity of matter states that while a numerical series is infinite, it is actualised in successive finite parts:[45] e.g., an infinite succession of animals maintains a specific existence.[46] According to Aristotle, sameness of matter is one component of "Same", the other being essence.[47] Plotinus, building on Aristotle's concept of the infinity of matter,[48] refers to matter as the "fullest manifestation of infinity."[49] Syrianus, however, argues that the corporeal universe necessarily has infinite potency in order to be eternal.[50] The corporeal universe, thus, has an infinite potency.[51]

In the last section of this passage, Syrianus sets out how each rank in the universe depends on the rank above it:

Rank	*Dependent on one above*
Material	held together through eternal generation
eternal generation	eternal motion of aether
eternal motion of the aether	unceasing circuit of the divine Soul
circuit of the soul	unfolded through continuous power of Time
Time	exercises its activity by virtue of the unlimitedness of eternally static intellect
Intellect	possesses eternal life by virtue of eternity, upon which all things depend for being and life
Eternity	infinite by virtue of the fount of infinity, which provides unfailingness to all essences and powers
Infinity	order of all things infinite descend from Essential Infinity

Here, the ranks of the universe function as conditions for each other. *Chronos* is superior to *psychē*, *aiōn* is superior to the noetic world—

[45] Proclus, *ET* prop. 94.

[46] *Plotinus*, *Enn*. II.4.15; See Syrianus, *In Tim*. fr. 4 Wear.

[47] Aristotle, *Metaph*. IV. 8, 1018 a 4ff.: "And these things are called 'same' in the preceding way, but other things are called 'same' absolutely, as 'one' is. For 'same' is predicated of those things whose matter is one, either in kind or in number, as well as of those whose essence is one; and so it is evident that 'sameness' is a kind of 'oneness' of being, either of a plurality of objects or of one thing which employs it as a plurality, as for example when one says that a thing is equal to itself, for then he employs it as two things."

[48] Aristotle's *Phys*. Γ 7.207. 35.

[49] Plotinus, *Enn*. II.4.15.

[50] Proclus, *In Tim*. I. 267.12ff.; 295.3ff.

[51] Syrianus, *In Met*. 117.32ff.; Proclus, *In Parm*. 1119.26; *PT* II, 2.82.

these entities function as conditions for each other. From this scheme, Syrianus comes to the conclusion that the One is not unlimited. Rather, an antithesis exists in the One between One and multiplicity, both and neither. Syrianus makes use of the previous objection that the One has a limit, but it gives limit to everything else (*Laws* IV 716 E) to show that the One is bounded by nothing. This section shows how levels of reality reflect its previous level.

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1142.9–1143.26

Ἐν ἄλλῳ μὲν ὂν κύκλῳ που ἂν περιέχοιτο ὑπ᾽ ἐκείνου ἐν ᾧ ἂν ἐνείη, καὶ πολλαχῇ ἂν αὐτοῦ ἅπτοιτο πολλοῖς·|τοῦ δὲ ἑνός τε καὶ ἀμεροῦς καὶ κύκλου μὴ μετέχοντος ἀδύνατον πολλαχῇ κύκλῳ ἅπτεσθαι.—Ἀδύνατον. [*Parm.* 138a3–6]

῾Αμεινον οὖν, ὡς ὁ ἡμέτερος ὑφηγεῖται πατήρ, κατ᾽ ἐκείνην τὴν ἐμφρονεστάτην καὶ ἀσφαλεστάτην ὁδὸν, ταῦτα λέγειν τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀποφάσκειν αὐτόν, ὅσα[a] καταφάσκεται ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ τοῦ ἑνὸς ὄντος, καὶ οὕτως ἀποφάσκειν, ὡς ἐν ἐκείνοις καταφάσκεται, καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸ ἐν ἄλλῳ τοιοῦτον θεωρεῖν, οἷον ἐν ἐκείνοις δῆλός ἐστιν ὁ φιλόσοφος λαμβάνων. σαφῶς γοῦν ἐκεῖ τάξιν τινὰ θεῶν ἐκφαίνων, καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ φησιν αὐτὴν εἶναι καὶ ἐν ἄλλῳ, καθότι καὶ ἔστραπται πρὸς ἑαυτὴν νοερῶς, καὶ μένει διαιωνίως ἐν τοῖς αἰτίοις ἑαυτῆς μοναδικῶς· μονὰς γάρ ἐστιν ἐκείνη τῶν νοερῶν θεῶν, μένουσα μὲν κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτῆς ὑπεροχὴν ἐν τοῖς πρὸ αὐτῆς νοητοῖς θεοῖς, ἐκφαίνουσα δὲ καὶ τὸ ἰδίωμα τὸ νοερὸν κατὰ τὸ ἐν αὑτῇ καὶ περὶ αὐτὴν ἐνεργεῖν. τὸ τοίνυν ἐν ἄλλῳ τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν, ὁποῖον τὸ ἐν τῇ αἰτίᾳ μένον καὶ περιεχόμενον ὑπὸ τῆς οἰκείας αἰτίας. τοῦτο οὖν ἐστιν εἰκότως καὶ τὸ πολλαχῇ καὶ πολλοῖς ἑαυτοῦ τῆς αἰτίας ἁπτόμενον· διότι γὰρ περιέχεται ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς, μερικώτερόν ἐστιν αὐτῆς. πᾶν δὲ τὸ μερικώτερον μᾶλλον πεπλήθυσται τῆς ἑαυτοῦ περιληπτικωτέρας αἰτίας· μᾶλλον δὲ πεπληθυσμένον ταῖς ἑαυτοῦ ποικίλαις δυνάμεσι συνάπτεται πρὸς ἐκεῖνο καὶ ἄλλως ἄλλαις· τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ πολλαχῆ· κατ᾽ ἄλλας γὰρ καὶ ἄλλας δυνάμεις ἄλλως καὶ ἄλλως ἑνοῦται πρὸς τὸ πρὸ αὐτοῦ νοητόν.

ἀλλ᾽ αὕτη μὲν ἡ τάξις τῶν ὄντων, ᾗ τὸ ἐν ἑαυτῷ προσήκει μετὰ τοῦ ἐν ἄλλῳ, καὶ πολλά ἐστι- μετέχει γὰρ τοῦ νοητοῦ πλήθους—, καὶ μέρη ἔχει—μετέχει γὰρ τῶν μέσων ἐν ταῖς πρὸ αὐτῆς αἰτίαις γενῶν—, καὶ κυκλική πώς ἐστι—μετέχει γὰρ τῆς τελευταίας τῶν μέσων τάξεως,

[a] **ὅσα** corr. Steel ex g (*quecumque*): **ὃ** ΑΣ

"If it were in another, it would be encircled all round by that in which it was contained, and would have many contacts with it at many points; but it is impossible for there to be contact at many points all round in a circle with a thing which is One and has not parts and is not round." "It is indeed impossible."

Better then, following the lead of my own Father, to proceed along that most sensible and safest course and say that he is denying of the One here just what is asserted of the One-Being in the Second Hypothesis, and he is denying it in the same way as it is asserted there, and indeed one should view the meaning of being "in another" as being the same as that which the philosopher clearly understands it to be in that place. Since it is clear, then, that there he is manifesting a certain class of gods, and says that this class is "in itself and in another" in virtue of the fact that it is both turned towards itself intellectually and remains eternally in monadic form in its causes; for that class is the monad of the intellectual gods, resting in virtue of its own superiority in the intelligible gods prior to it, but revealing also its intellectual characteristic by activating itself in itself and about itself—the sense of "in another", then, is that of remaining at rest in its cause and being comprehended by its own cause. This, therefore is also the reasonable sense in which to take "in many ways," and touching its own cause "at many points"; for because it is surrounded by it, it is more particular than it; and everything that is more particular is more pluralised than its own cause which comprehends it, and being more pluralised it is joined to it by its own various powers and in different ways by different of them, and this is what is meant by "in many ways"; for in virtue of its various powers it is variously united to the intelligible which is prior to it.

But this order of beings, to which "being in itself" along with "being in another" properly applies, is also a multiplicity (for it partakes of the intelligible multiplicity), and it has parts (for it partakes of the median classes among the causes prior to it), and it is in a way circular (for it partakes of the ultimate class of the middle gods—I mean the shape that

λέγω δὴ τοῦ ἐκεῖ σχήματος. διόπερ οὔτε ἕν ἐστιν ἁπλῶς, ἀλλὰ πολλά, οὔτε ἀμερής,[a] ἀλλὰ μέρη ἔχουσα, οὔτε ἐπέκεινα σχήματος παντός, ἀλλὰ κυκλική. καὶ, ὡς μὲν πολλὰ οὖσα, δύναται πολλοῖς ἅπτεσθαι τῶν πρὸ αὐτῆς, ὡς δὲ μέρη ἔχουσα, πολλαχῇ αὐτοῖς κοινωνεῖν καὶ διαφόρως, ὡς δὲ ἐσχηματισμένη, κύκλῳ περιέχεσθαι ὑπ' αὐτῶν· τὸ γὰρ σχηματιζόμενον πᾶν ὑπὸ τοῦ σχηματίζοντος περιέχεται· τὸ δὲ ἓν οὔτε μέρη ἔχει οὔτε κύκλου μετείληχεν, ὥστε οὐ δυνατὸν αἰτίαν εἶναι πρὸ αὐτοῦ τὴν πολλαχῇ καὶ κύκλῳ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἁπτομένην, ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἐπέκεινα πάντων, ὡς [ἂν][b] αἰτίαν κρείττονα οὐκ ἔχον· ἀδύνατον γὰρ εἶναί τι κύκλῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ πολλαχῇ ἁπτόμενον, ἑνὸς ὄντος καὶ ἀμεροῦς καὶ κύκλου [μὴ][c] μετέχοντος· ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα προσέθηκεν ἵνα φανῇ τὰ πολλὰ τὸ μέρη ἔχειν, τὸ κύκλου μόνον[d] μετέχειν, ἃ δὴ πάντα προσήκει ταύτῃ τῇ τάξει τῶν ὄντων, ᾗ τὸ ἐν αὑτῷ καὶ ἐν ἄλλῳ προσφέρομεν· πολλά τε γάρ ἐστιν ὡς πρὸς τὴν νοητὴν ἕνωσιν, καὶ μέρη ἔχει καὶ κύκλου μετείληχεν, ἐπειδὴ τὰ δεύτερα δεῖ μετέχειν τῶν πρὸ αὐτῶν. ἐπεὶ καὶ ὅταν λέγηται μονάς, ὡς ἐν νοεροῖς ἐστι μονάς· εἰ δὲ μή, πλῆθός ἐστι πρὸς τὰς νοητὰς μονάδας· καὶ ὅταν λέγηται ὅλη καὶ ἀμέριστος, ὡς ἐν νοεροῖς καὶ ταῦτα λέγεται παρ' ἡμῶν· εἰ δὲ μή, μέρη ἔχει πρός γε τὴν ὁλότητα τὴν νοητήν· καὶ ὅταν ἀσχημάτιστος, πάλιν [ὡς][e] ἐν νοεροῖς, ἐπεὶ πάντως αὐτὴν ἀναγκαῖον μετέχειν τοῦ σχήματος τοῦ πρὸ αὐτῆς.

---

[a] **ἀμερής** GPRg: **ἀμερές** A^{c}F [b] **ἂν** add. Strobel ex g (*utique*) [c] **μὴ** add. Steel ex g (*non*) (add. **οὐ** ante **κύκλου** Cous^{2}) (cf. *Parm.* 138a6) [d] **μόνον** corr. Steel ex g (*solum*): **μὴ** AΣ [e] **ὡς** add. Steel ex g (*ut*)

is proper to that order.) Wherefore it is not one absolutely, but many, nor is it partless, but has parts, nor is it beyond all shape, but circular. And, as being many, it is able to touch what is prior to it at many points; inasmuch as it has parts, it is able to communicate with its priors in many different ways; and as endowed with shape, it is surrounded in a circle by them; for everything which is shaped is surrounded by that which gives it shape, whereas the one neither has parts nor participates in circularity. So that it is not possible for there to be a cause prior to it which touches the One in many places and in a circle, but it is beyond all things, as having no causal principle superior to itself; for it is impossible for there to be anything which touches it in a circle and in many places, since it is One and partless and not partaking in circularity; all these things he has added in order that there should appear the characteristics of multiplicity, having parts and partaking in circularity, all of which are proper to this class of beings, in which we also locate the characteristics of being in oneself and in another; for this class is many in comparison with the intelligible unity, and has parts and partakes in circularity, since all secondary things must partake in what is prior to them. Since even when it is called a monad, it is a monad in a mode proper to the intellectual realm; otherwise, it is a multiplicity in comparison with the noetic monads; and when it is said to be whole and partless, that is in relation to the intellectual realm, and this is said from our perspective; and even if it does not have parts, yet it has parts in comparison with intelligible wholeness; and when we say it is without shape, once again this is in the intellectual realm, since in any case it is necessary for it to partake in the shape that is prior to it.

Commentary

In this discussion of the role of κύκλῳ in κύκλῳ που ἂν περιέχοιτο, Proclus lays out the Syrianic syllogism,[1] "if the One is in itself/if the One is not in itself," in order to prove that the One is neither in itself nor in another. The point Parmenides makes in 138 is that everything which is in something else is contained "in a circle" and it touches whatever contains it at many points. He argues that the One cannot be in another because, if it were, it would be encircled and would have contact at many points. The One, however, cannot be encircled because it is not round and it cannot have contact at many points because it does not have parts. Building on the previous lemma, moreover, he argues that because the One has no beginning, middle or end, it is not contained. What is of interest here is how Syrianus looks beyond issues of place and spatial extension with regard to *en allō* and *en heauto*. Syrianus addresses the lemma by working back from the second to the first hypothesis, showing that the various layers of the intelligible world are not attributable to the One. Syrianus wants to unite the positive statement of the second hypothesis with the negative statements of the first hypothesis, making the second hypothesis a description of levels of gods.

Prior to Syrianus' opinion, Proclus presents two other commentators, likely to be Porphyry and Iamblichus. The first commentator (1140.26 f.) requires that the One be spatially extended in some way and denies that the One is "in a place". Proclus says that he views the topic "in a restricted sense"—as in "in a place" or "in a container."[2] Proclus says that he reconciles the text well enough, but he still rejects this theory, saying the Platonist theory is that all higher entities, even individual souls, are not in a place[3]—when discussing the One, then, there must be more to the lemma than an argument based on place.[4] The second commentator

[1] Here, the attribute "in itself" and "in another" is denied of the One. See Proclus, *In Parm.* 1140.4–1144.20 (a commentary on *Parm.* 138A3–7) which demonstrates that the One is not in another. For Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Syrianus, "in another" signifies "that which remains in its cause." Saffrey and Westerink (1974) 129.

[2] Dillon identifies the commentator as Porphyry based on the use of "in a restricted sense." He cites Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 204.24 ff. where Porphyry treats a dialogue *merikōteron*, as opposed to Iamblichus, who treats it *epoptlikōteron*. See Dillon (1987) 475 and Dillon (1988) 35.

[3] Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 161.1–3; *In Remp.* 2.198.

[4] Syrianus, and later, Proclus, regard space as a corporeal entity and only other corporeal entities could interact with space. Space was the physical boundary of corporeal bodies. On late antique views of place, see Sambursky (1978) II 8. Schrenk explains why

(1141.13 ff.), most likely Iamblichus,[5] denies of the One every sense of being in something else. He considers how Plato takes the sense of being in something—just as a monad is a sort of point and a point is in a line, does not mean it is contained by something else, just as a point is not contained in a line (a point is not contained κύκλῳ by the line, nor is it touched πολλαχοῦ). Proclus' complaint is that this approach is far too literal: even if a point is not in a line spatially, it can be contained in other ways. The line, for instance, contains the characteristics of the point, such as its limit.

In 1142.10 ff. Proclus gives Syrianus' opinion that the lemma must refer to the μονάς ἐν νοεροῖς which experiences the higher participation of intelligible-intellectual gods and relates back to the source in the intelligible level. The monad at the intellectual level rests in its cause and is comprehended in the cause. Syrianus refers here to the second hypothesis, which was for him a blue-print of the whole intelligible world. All intelligible characters are attributed to the One, which, in turn, transcends the highest class of intellectual gods belonging to the One-Being at 145 B 6 ff. in the second hypothesis.[6] He works from the second to the first hypothesis, which expresses what is denied of the One. All characteristics denied of the One are references to a distinct section of the second hypothesis, which embraces layers of the intelligible, including: the noetic triads; noetic-noeric triads; and the noeric hebdomad.[7] This element of the intellectual realm is the highest monad of the noeric gods. Syrianus denies this level of being to the One in order to assert that the One is both the cause of them and transcends them. Proclus reports his Master's argument also in *Platonic Theology* II, 12, placing emphasis on the One's distinction from the summit of the intellectual world.[8]

---

space must be corporeal for Proclus—in order to bridge the intelligible and sensible realms—in his article on space as light (1989).

[5] Dillon identifies the commentator as Iamblichus based on Proclus' praise of Iamblichus for looking μᾶλλον εἰς τὰ πράγματα (Proclus, *In Tim*. III,168.5–7). Dillon, (1988) 35. Dillon also notes Iamblichus' interest in the various senses of "in" in Iamblichus' *Commentary on the Categories* (ap. Simpl. *in Cat*. [CAG VIII] 46, 15–47, 28); see Dillon (1988) 35.

[6] Dillon (1987) 475.

[7] See Van Campe (2009) 268: Syrianus interprets different attributes of Being as attributes of different gods; the deduction "that the One is" starts from the highest level of intelligible Being, "the One Being", which comprehends all attributes in a unified way, while still acting as the procession of beings into multiplicity; Proclus, *PT* I, 11, p. 50, 2–3.

[8] Proclus, *PT* II, 12, p. 68, 6–22: "Such is the One, says Parmenides, since it is neither

Syrianus here also presents a discussion on the nature of cause; notably, that a cause, as more general, is participated in by the more particular, which is joined to the cause in various ways. The One, as ultimate cause, is not comprehended by any entity. While it does remain in itself and process out of itself, it does not remain in another.

In Parm. 1142.38–1144.40 seem to be Syrianic, although it is less clear here that Proclus refers to his teacher directly. In this section, Proclus argues that the One does not derive from another cause—once it has been established that the One is neither in itself nor another. He says that the One is not many, as what is many can touch what is prior to it at many points and it does not have shape, as whatever has shape is surrounded by that which gives it shape. Hence, the One does not have points and does not participate in circularity. It is not possible for there to be a cause prior to the One which touches the One in many places and in a circle. The One is thus superior to self-constituted entities, including the monads which inhabit the intellectual realm, as well as wholes and parts.

in itself, nor in another. For if it were in another, it would be on all sides comprehended by that in which it is and would everywhere touch that which comprehends it." Trans. Taylor (1816).

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1174.18–1175.22

Οὐδὲ μὴν ταὐτόν γε ⟨οὔτε⟩ ἑτέρῳ οὔτε ἑαυτῷ ἔσται, οὐδ' αὖ ἕτερον οὔτε ἑαυτοῦ οὔτε ἑτέρου ἂν εἴη.—Πῇ δή; [*Parm.* 139b4–5].

Οὗτοι μὲν οὖν τοιαῦτα διαποροῦντες λέγουσιν. εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ διαιτῆσαι τοῖς λόγοις τῶν οὕτω κλεινοτάτων καὶ θείων ἀνδρῶν, καὶ ταῦτα τῶν προκειμένων ἔξω τῆς τοιαύτης οὔσης ἐν τῷ παρόντι ζητήσεως καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις ἡμῖν διὰ πλειόνων ἐξετασθείσης, ᾽ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν ὑφηγήσεως οἰστέον[a] καὶ τούτων[b] τὴν κρίσιν ἀξιοῦσαν ἀμφοτέρους λέγειν ὀρθῶς, καὶ τοὺς πανταχοῦ τὰ γένη τιθεμένους καὶ τοὺς μετὰ τὸ ἓν οὐ προσιεμένους τοῦτον τετάχθαι τὸν ἀριθμόν· εἶναι μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοεροῖς τὰ γένη κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν τάξιν, ἀλλὰ ἄλλως μὲν ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις, ἄλλως δὲ ἐν τοῖς δευτέροις, ὅπου μὲν νοητῶς, ὅπου δὲ νοερῶς· τοῦτο δὲ ταὐτὸν τῷ ὅπου μὲν ἑνοειδῶς| καὶ ἀδιακρίτως, ὅπου δὲ διακεκριμένως ἰδίᾳ κατὰ τὸν οἰκεῖον ἀριθμόν. ὥστ' οὐκ ἂν θαυμάσαις εἰ ἡ μονὰς ἡ νοητὴ περιέχει τὴν νοερὰν πεμπάδα πᾶσαν ἀδιαιρέτως καὶ ἑνοειδῶς, ὅπου διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν καὶ ἡ στάσις τρόπον τινὰ καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἓν καὶ ἡ ταυτότης καὶ ἡ ἑτερότης, ἀδιακρίτων πάντων ὄντων κατὰ σκοτόεσσαν ὁμίχλην, φησὶν ὁ θεολόγος. ″οπου γὰρ καὶ ἡ τῶν μοναδικῶν ἀριθμῶν αἰτία μονὰς πάντας ἀποδείκνυται περιέχουσα τοὺς λόγους οὓς δεκαδικῶς μὲν ἡ δεκὰς περιείληφε, τετραδικῶς δὲ ἡ τετράς, τί χρὴ θαυμάζειν εἰ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὄντων μοναδικῶς μὲν ἡ νοητὴ μονὰς περιέχει πάντα τὰ γένη καὶ ἀδιακρίτως, δυαδικῶς δὲ ἄλλη τις τάξις καὶ ἄλλη τετραδικῶς; ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰς ἰδέας εἶναι καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς, ὅμως οὐ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον αὐτὰς ὕπερ ἐν τοῖς νοεροῖς ὑφεστάναι λέγομεν ὁλικῶς, ἡνωμένως, πατρικῶς, ἐνταῦθα δὲ διῃρημένως. μερικῶς, δημιουργικῶς, ἀνάγκη δὲ πανταχοῦ τὸν τῶν ἰδεῶν ἀριθμὸν ἐξηρτῆσθαι τῶν τοῦ ὄντος γενῶν. εἴπερ οὖν αἱ νοεραὶ ἰδέαι μετέχουσι τῶν νοερῶν γενῶν, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ αἱ νοηταὶ μεθέξουσι τῶν νοητῶν. εἰ δὴ κατὰ τὸ πέρας τῶν νοητῶν αἱ πρώτισται τῶν ἰδεῶν τέτταρες, δεῖ πρὸ τῆς

[a] **οἰστέον** AFPRg: **ἰστέον** MG [b] **τούτων** AΣg: **τούτου** Cous[2]

"Further, the One cannot be either the same as another or the same as itself, nor yet other than itself or other than another." "Why is that?"

On the basis of the teaching of our Master, we may at any rate make clear his judgment that considers both schools of opinion to speak rightly, both those which place the genera at every level and those who do not allow this number to be ranked directly after the One; for the genera are in the intelligible and in the intellectual realms according to the rank proper to them in each case, but in one way among the primal entities, and in another among the secondary—here intelligibly, there intellectually. And this is the same as to say here unitarily and indivisibly, and there divisbly each according to its own number, so that one should not wonder if the intelligible monad comprehends the whole intellectual pentad indivisibly and unitarily, where we find that subsumed under unity both Rest in some way and Motion are one, and also Sameness and Otherness, all being undivided "in the darkling mist", as the theologian says.[1] For where also the monad which is the cause of monadic numbers is shown to comprehend all the reason-principles which the decad comprehends decadically, and the tetrad tetradically, why should one wonder if on the plane of beings, the intelligible monad comprehends all the classes of being monadically and indivisibly, while some other order comprehends them dyadically, and yet another tetradically, since the Ideas are also in the intelligible realm; but nevertheless we do not say that they exist in the same way as in the intellectual realm, but there as wholes, unitarily and paternally, whereas in this latter realm they exist separately, individually, and demiurgically, but it is necessary that everywhere the number of the ideas be dependent upon the genera of being? If, then, the intellectual ideas partake of the intellectual species, it is plain that also the intelligible ideas will partake of the intelligible species. If, then, at the limit of the intelligibles the primary ones among the ideas are four, there must be

[1] Orpheus, *Hymn* 6.6.

εἰδητικῆς τετράδος εἶναι τὴν μοναδικὴν ὑπόστασιν τῶν γενῶν· οὕτω γὰρ καὶ ἐν τοῖς νοεροῖς πρὸ τῆς δεκαδικῆς ὑπάρξεως τῶν ἰδεῶν ἡ πεμπαδικὴ τῶν γενῶν ἐστιν αἰτία.

Commentary

In this fragment, Syrianus discusses how the genera of being in Plato's *Sophist* 256 A ff. are related to the similar genera of being denied here of the One.[2] Syrianus combines the Porphyrian claim that the genera exist at every level with the Iamblichean argument that these genera are not to be ranked directly after the One, but only in the intellective realm, as they constitute a pentad, and nothing more than a triad would be proper to the intelligible realm.[3] Syrianus posits that the genera are present at the level of the intelligible and intellectual realms, which is possible because the monad encompasses the intellectual pentad. This fragment builds on Syrianus' claim that *Parmenides* 139 B 3 asserts the One is fixed beyond the intellectual realms. Syrianus identifies what is being denied of the One here as the demiurgic order of gods, the first level of the intellective order.

In 1173.7 ff., Proclus gives the opinion of a commentator likely to be Porphyry.[4] This commentator[5] takes terms in an exclusively philosophical sense,[6] and remarks that Motion, Rest, and Sameness and Otherness are denied of the One, but not all forms. This group identifies the forms with the genera of being, which, according to this authority, exist at every level. The Primally Existent, moreover, (*to protôs on*) comprehends all these genera, after proceeding forth from the supra-essential and becoming Being. The Primally Existent has Sameness, in so far as it

[2] For a general discussion of forms and the genera of being, see Gersh (1978) 96–97.

[3] See Van Campe (2009) 262, where she argues that the five genera of Being are situated in the intellectual realm, rather than immediately after the absolute unity of the One.

[4] Dillon (1988) 39.

[5] Dillon notes that "φιλοσόφως μόνον ταύτα λαμβανόντες" sounds anti-Porphyrian. Porphyry is often criticised for not taking things subtly. See Dillon (1987) 524, note 35.

[6] As opposed to the theological sense.

prior to the tetrad of forms a monadic creation of the genera; for thus also in the intellectual realm prior to the decadic generation of the ideas there exists a pentadic cause of the classes of being (*genē*).

---

is similar to what produced it, and Otherness, in so far as it is different. It embraces both motion—as it proceeds forth—and stability, because it is established in the One. Dillon relates this passage to Plotinus' *Enn*. VI. 2, but credits the authority with a great deal of innovation regarding Sameness as an imitation of the One's unity, Otherness as the reflection of the One's distinction from itself.[7] The authority, moreover, associates Motion with procession from the One, and Rest with remaining. Dillon notes that we know from Marius Victorinus that Porphyry developed the triad of *monê-proodos-epistrophê*, and he goes on to say that Porphyry uses the genera of Being to distinguish Intellect or Being from the primal One.[8]

Proclus dismisses this commentator, saying that the genera should be understood in the context of the One and not of Being. The genera are symbols of actual divine orders and not just genera of being or forms.[9] These genera, moreover, should be denied of the One, as it has no attributes and does not participate in transcendent negations.

The second commentator (1174.3), identified as Iamblichus by Dillon,[10] places the genera in the intellectual realm and says that these are genera of Being and do not derive existence from the One. He argues that the multiplicity derived from the One is most akin to the One—while monads and triads might be found in the realms next door to the One; the pentad, however, is too different from the One to be found contiguous. In *In Tim*. fr. 29 Dillon, Iamblichus places τὸ αἰὲι ὄν[11] on a higher level than

[7] Dillon (1988) 39.

[8] See Dillon (1988) 40. Dillon refers to *Anon. Taur*. (XIV, 21–35).

[9] Van Campe (2009) 254.

[10] Dillon identifies this commentator as Iamblichus based on his use of vocabulary, (1988) 41.

[11] This includes the whole reality down to the individual mind. See Iamblichus, *In Tim*. fr. 29 Dillon, p. 299.

τὰ γένη τοῦ ὄντος, and places it at the summit of the noetic realm. For Iamblichus only triads are proper to the intelligible realm, while Syrianus argues that pentads can be seen monadically. He attributes characteristics denied of the One to the noeric realm—an innovation which sets the stage for Syrianus' interpretations of the negations in the first hypothesis, which become assertions in the second hypothesis.[12]

Syrianus, as is most frequently the case, considers both schools correct—he agrees that there are genera of being at every level of reality and says that these genera exist not directly after the One, but at the intelligible and intellectual levels. The genera are able to exist in both of these levels because they exist suitably according to whatever rank they inhabit. Thus, at the intelligible level, the genera exist intelligibly, at the intellectual level, the genera exist intellectually.[13] Proclus here gives Syrianus' hierarchy of the intelligible-intellectual universe, in which Syrianus characterises the intelligible and intellectual universes as places of opposition between unity and multiplicity. He describes the intelligible universe as a place of unity and the intellective universe as one of multiplicity. Syrianus posits that the intelligible monad subsumes within itself the intellectual pentad. This pentad is said to contain Rest and Motion, Sameness and Otherness, as well as Being, because its chief characteristic is that of totality.[14]

Later in the fragment, the genera come to represent the forms, so that the ideas exist in every level of the intelligible and intellectual universe, although in the former level, which represents wholes, they are taken up as wholes, and in the latter universe, representing multiplicity, they are

[12] Dillon (1988) 42.

[13] Van Campe (2009) 268; See Syrianus, *In Met.* 5, 31–36, 3 where essential attributes descend from the intelligible realm above and spread over all beings.

[14] Proclus, *PT* II, 12, p. 66.18–67.3. *PT* IV, 36, 36 proposes the following:

Intelligible gods:
1st level: monad
2nd level: dyad
3rd level: triad

Intelligible-intellective gods:
1st level: tetrad
2nd level: pentad
3rd level: hexad

Intellective:
hebdomad.

taken up individually.[15] While Proclus does not allude to this theory here, in *In Parm.*764.32ff. the *megista genē* of the *Sophist* are identified with the Intellect itself.[16] The genera are situated at the first level so that they act as supra-essential forms, in which other manifestations in lower realms participate.

In *Platonic Theology* II, 12, Proclus gives an overview of same and different as it is applied to the second hypothesis. Here, the third order corresponds to the demiurgic order and sameness and difference is affirmed for the hypercosmic gods.[17]

The placement of the genera of being has changed from Porphyry to Syrianus: Porphyry argues that the genera of being can be seen at every level, while Iamblichus says that they are only at the intelligible level, as only a triad can follow from the One, while Syrianus puts the thought of the two together, saying that pentads can be seen monadically—the group of the five *megista genē* are inherent in the monad of the intelligible world monadically. Proclus further systematises the thought of Syrianus, taking the five genera as properties of being and spreading them throughout the different orders of the intelligible universe.[18] In *Platonic Theology* III 18, Proclus describes how the genera are situated in the three intelligible triads: the first triad contains "essence" and endows intelligibles with a stable power; the second is the cause of "movement and repose" and is the place where Limit and Unlimitedness exist, and the third, is characterised as "same and other"—here, the Intelligible Intellect, the Essential Living Being, also houses the forms.[19]

[15] On the question of whether intelligible substances participate in the Ideas, Syrianus argues that some of the intelligible substances are only paradigms, while others participate in higher ones; Syr., *In Met.* 109.16–19. See D'Hoine (2004) 20.

[16] In other places, Proclus says that the five genera merely characterise Intellect; see *PT* V, 1.4 and Steel (1992) 63.

[17] Proclus, *PT* VI, 14 affirms the hypercosmic gods; *In Parm.* 1172.27–1191.9, denies them.

[18] Steel (1992) 63.

[19] See also *PT* II, 12, p. 69, 15ff. and Saffrey and Westerink's discussion (1974) 70. For a discussion of the relation between the three intelligible triads and the genera, see Opsomer (2000) 269.

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1217.11–1219.7

Τί δέ; πρεσβύτερον ἢ νεώτερον ἢ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡλικίαν ἔχειν τὸ ἓν δοκεῖ τῷ δυνατὸν εἶναι;—Τί δὴ γὰρ οὔ; [*Parm.* 140e1–2].

Μήποτε οὖν ἄμεινον κἀνταῦθα τῆς τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν μεμνῆσθαι παραδόσεως, ὅτι δὴ περὶ τῶν θείων ψυχῶν ὁ λόγος· αὗται γὰρ ἐκθεοῦνται τῷ μετέχειν ἀεὶ τῶν θεῶν· ταύταις δὲ προσήκει χρόνος ὁ πρώτιστος, οὐχ ὁ προελθὼν εἰς τὸ ἐμφανὲς, ἀλλ' ὁ ἀπόλυτος καὶ ἄσχετος, καθ' ὃν αἱ περίοδοι πᾶσαι μετροῦνται τῶν ψυχῶν, καὶ περὶ τὸ νοητὸν χορεῖαι[a] ⟨καὶ⟩[b] ἀνακυκλήσεις· ἄνωθεν γὰρ ἄρχεται μιμούμενος τὸν αἰῶνα τὸν πάντων περιεκτικὸν καὶ συνέχει πᾶσαν κίνησιν, εἴτε ψυχικὴν εἴτε ζωτικὴν εἴτε ὁπωσοῦν ὑφίστασθαι λεγομένην, καὶ ἀνελίττει καὶ τελεῖοι, καὶ ἔστι νοῦς μὲν αὐτὸς κατ' οὐσίαν, χορείαις δὲ ταῖς θείαις ψυχαῖς καὶ τῆς περὶ τὸ νοητὸν ἀπείρου κινήσεως αἴτιος· διὸ[c] καὶ ἐν ταύταις ἐστὶ τὸ πρεσβύτερον ⟨καὶ νεώτερον⟩[d] καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡλικίαν ἄγον· καὶ ταῦτα πάντα διχῶς· τό τε γὰρ πρεσβύτερον ἐν αὐταῖς πρὸς μὲν ἑαυτὰς, καθ' ὅσον ταῖς κρείττοσιν ἑαυτῶν δυνάμεσι μᾶλλον ἀπολαύουσι τῆς ἀπειρίας τοῦ χρόνου καὶ πλέον αὐτοῦ μετέχουσιν— οὐ γὰρ τῆς ὁμοίας πληροῦται τελειότητος ἀπὸ τῶν θειοτέρων κατὰ πάσας ἑαυτῶν τὰς δυνάμεις, ἀλλὰ ταῖς μὲν πλέον, ταῖς δὲ ἔλαττον· τὸ δὲ πλείονος χρόνου μετέχον πρεσβύτερόν φαμεν—, πρὸς δὲ τὰ ἄλλα, καθ' ὅσον αἱ μὲν αὐτῶν τὴν ὅλην ὑποδέχονται| τοῦ χρόνου μέτρησιν καὶ τὴν πᾶσαν ἔκτασιν τὴν εἰς τὰς ψυχὰς προϊοῦσαν, αἱ δὲ μερικωτέραις μετροῦνται περιόδοις· πρεσβύτεραι οὖν ὧν ἡ περίοδος ὁλικωτέρα καὶ ἐπὶ χρόνον πλείω ἐκτεινομένη. καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸ νεώτερον, [τὸ μὲν ὡς

[a] **χορεῖαι** ΑΣ: *choreales* g [b] **καὶ**[2] add. A [c] **διὸ** corr. Steel ex g (*propter quod*): **δι' ὃ** M[b] **δι' ὧν** ΑΣ [d] **καὶ νεώτερον** add. Steel.

"Well then, can it be held that the One can be older or younger than anything, or as the same age as anything?" "Why not?"

It is after all better, then, in this case also to call attention to the teachings of our Master, to the effect that the text here concerns divine souls; for these are divinised by participating eternally in the gods, and it is to these that the most primal time properly refers, not that which has proceeded into the visible realm, but that which is absolute and not-relative, according to which are measured all the circuits of the souls, and their dances and encirclings around the intelligible.[1] For it takes its beginnings from above, imitating that eternity which comprehends all things and holds together all motion, whether it be psychic or vital or however it be said to arise, and it unfolds it and brings it to completion, and it is itself in essence an intellect, while acting as cause for divine souls of their "dance", and of their infinite motion around the intelligible, and by means of which there also arises in them that which is "older" and "younger" and "of the same age". And all these terms can be taken in two senses, for "older" in them can be understood in relation to themselves, in so far as by virtue of their superior powers they get more benefit from the infinity of time and take a larger share of it; for they are not filled with the same degree of completeness from the orders more divine than themselves in respect of all their powers, but more in virtue of some and less in virtue of others, and that which partakes of more time we call "older"; and in relation to other things, inasmuch as some of them accept the whole measurement of time and the whole extension of it which proceeds into souls, while others are measured by its more particular circuits. Those, then, are "older", the circuit of which is more general and extended over more time.

[1] C.f. Iamblichus, ap. Simpl. *In Categ.* 351, 32–352, 20: Time is "a kind of dance of the soul around the Intellect" (χορεία τινὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περὶ τὸν νοῦν). Iamblichus identifies this theory as a Pythagorean doctrine. C.f. Sambursky and Pines (1971) 26, note 1; 105.

πρὸς ἑαυτὸ τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν οἷον τὸ ταῖς ὑφειμέναις δυνάμεσιν ἔλαττον χρόνου μετέχον—ἑαυτοῦ γὰρ τὸ τοιοῦτον νεώτερον],[a] ἄνω μὲν οἷον πολιούμενον τῷ συνεκτείνειν ἑαυτὸ πρὸς τὴν ὅλην τοῦ χρόνου δύναμιν, κάτω δὲ ἔτι νεάζον τῷ μερικώτερον ἀπολαύειν τοῦ χρόνου—ὡς δὲ πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα, κατὰ τὴν ὕφεσιν τῆς ἐνεργείας· τὸ γὰρ δι' ἐλάττονος περιόδου μετρουμένην ἔχον τὴν ἑαυτοῦ περιφορὰν νεώτερόν ἐστι τοῦ διὰ πλείονος.

τό γε μὴν τὴν αὐτὴν ἡλικίαν ἄγον ἑαυτῷ τε καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις οὐκ ἄδηλον ὅπως ἐπὶ τῶν συστοίχων θεωρεῖται πραγμάτων, ἐφ' ὧν ἡ αὐτὴ μέθεξις καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῆς τελειότητος μέτρον. πᾶσα δὲ θεία ψυχή, κἂν καθ' ἕτερον χρόνον αὐτῆς ἡ περίοδος μετρῆται, καθ' ἕτερον δὲ τοῦ ἐξημμένου σώματος ἑαυτῆς, ἀλλ' ἔχει τὴν ἴσην ἀποκατάστασιν, αὕτη τὲ κατὰ τὸν αὑτῆς ἀεὶ χρόνον κἀκεῖνο κατὰ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ· διὸ πάλιν ἰσήλικός ἐστιν ἑαυτῇ τε καὶ ἐκείνῳ κατὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον.

οὐκ ἄρα ἐπὶ τὸν συνεγνωσμένον χρόνον ἀναγκασθησόμεθα καταφεύγειν διὰ τὸ γίγνεσθαι τοῦτο καὶ γεγονέναι—καὶ γὰρ ταῦτά ἐστιν ἐν ταῖς περιόδοις τῶν θείων ψυχῶν—, οὐδ' αὖ ἐπὶ τὸν αἰῶνα μεταβησόμεθα διὰ τὴν δευτέραν ὑπόθεσιν καταφάσκουσαν τὸν χρόνον· πᾶσαν γὰρ ἐκεῖ φαμεν κατὰ τὸ ἑξῆς παραδεδόσθαι τὴν τοῦ ὄντος πρόοδον, ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν μονάδων διὰ τῶν νοερῶν τάξεων καὶ ὑπερκοσμίων καὶ ἐγκοσμίων ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκθεουμένην ἀσώματον οὐσίαν καταντήσασαν.

ἑπόμεθά γε μὴν τῷ Πλάτωνι καὶ ἐν Τιμαίῳ τὸν χρόνον πάσης μέτρον ἀποφηναμένῳ ζωῆς μεταβατικῆς, καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἄρξασθαι θείας ζωῆς καὶ ἔμφρονος βίου πρὸς τὸν σύμπαντα χρόνον, καὶ ἐν τῷ Φαίδρῳ διὰ χρόνου τὸ ὂν αὐτὰς λέγοντι καθορᾶν, διότι χρονικῶς, ἀλλ' οὐκ αἰωνίως ὁρῶσι. καὶ οὐδὲν δεησόμεθα τὸ πρεσβύτερον καὶ νεώτερον καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡλικίαν ἄγον ἐπὶ τάξεως ἀκούειν καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὸ αἴτιον καὶ αἰτιατὸν διαφορᾶς, οὐδὲ ζητεῖν τί τὸ τῆς τάξεως ταύτης αἴτιον, ἀλλ' αὐτοφυῶς ἐπὶ τῶν χρονικῶν μέτρων τὰ τοιαῦτα παραλαμβάνομεν τῶν τε μειζόνων καὶ ἐλαττόνων καὶ τῶν ἀλλήλοις ὁμοστοίχων.

[a] **τὸ**^{2}…**νεώτερον** add. Steel ex g (*hoc quidem ut ad se ipsum tale est quale quod submissis potentiis minus minus tempore participat—se ipso enim quod tale iunius*)

And indeed the expression "younger" has a similar range of meanings; in relation to itself, it is such as to participate less in Time than powers inferior to it; for being younger than itself, in its relation to what is above it, it is as it were grown ancient by extending itself in parallel to the whole power of time; while in relation to what is below it, it is still youthful by reason of its more partial enjoyment of Time. In relation to other things, the term has reference to the declination of its activity, for that which has its circuit measured by a lesser circumference is "younger" than that which has it through a larger one.

As for the concept of being "like in age", both in relation to itself and to other things, it is plain how one should relate it to things at the same level, which enjoy the same method of participation and the same measure of perfection. Every divine soul, after all, even if its circuit is measured according to a different time from that of its dependent body, yet has the same period of return, and this is always measured by its own time, while that of the body is measured according to the time proper to it; for which reason in turn it is of equal age both to itself and analogously to the body also.

We will not then be forced to resort to the normal sense of time merely because of the mention of coming to be and having come to be; for these also are to be found in the circuits of divine souls; nor on the other hand will we have to resort to identifying it with Eternity, because the Second Hypothesis asserts time of the One; for we declare that there we find set out in order the procession of Being right from the intelligible monads through the intellectual and supracosmic and encosmic orders down to an encounter with divinised incorporeal being.

We are following here the doctrine of Plato, who both declared in the *Timaeus* [36 C] that Time is the measure for all things of transitive life, and that Soul is the first principle of divine life and intelligent living for the whole of time; and who has declared in the *Phaedrus* [247 D] that the souls behold Being because they view things in Time, not in Eternity. And there will be no need for us to understand the expressions "younger" and "older" and "of the same age" as referring to order of being and the difference between the cause and the caused, nor will we need to enquire what is the cause of that order, but we can take such expressions in their natural sense as referring to measures of time greater and less and equal to others, as the case may be.

Commentary

In this discussion of the One's transcendence over Time, Syrianus relates Parmenides' lemma that the One is younger and older and the same age as everything, to the divine soul which participates in primal Time. Syrianus' doctrine of primal Time here relates to his concept of what takes place in the second hypothesis—he offers a determined effort to identify each level of divine entities.[2] The One, moreover, is denied of all levels in turn.

Regarding the lemma, Proclus wishes to prove that the One does not participate in Time by demonstrating that the One does not participate in being younger or older or of the same age. Proclus gives the views of five commentators on this topic, beginning with the view of those who believed that all things, including God, were comprehended by time (1213.17 ff.). This group of physical philosophers say that all things, including God, are comprehended by Time. The physical philosophers deny progress of time to the One, placing the intelligible world in a state of eternity and positing the Stoic position of the Soul as the supreme principle. There is, thus, no difference between higher and lower time. Anaxagoras reflects this idea with his concept of the soul, but more pointedly, this theory reflects Plotinus and the idea of holistic time—pure soul is not subject to our temporality, rather discursive thought is true of world soul. Proclus responds that the One is not in body (for it would have to be in another), not in Soul (for it does not partake in Time), and not in Intellect (for it does not experience motion or rest, the defining characteristic of Intellect).

Next, he discusses what Plato means by time in 1214.24 ff., dividing the discussion into the views of five groups of commentators. The first category, "[m]ost of those who have concerned themselves with this", seems to include Plotinus (*Enn.* VI. 9.3.2), and says that Plato refers to the "obvious type of time", explaining that Plato says coming to being is particular to those which participate in time (*Parm.* 141 A). This view is based on *Parmenides* 141 A where Plato says that coming to be is proper to those things that participate in time. Proclus points out that the transcendence of ordinary time is not particular to the One because Intellect transcends ordinary time, as well (1215.29 ff.). Because the One transcends Intellect, it must transcend Eternity, the realm of the Intellect.

[2] Steel (2009) 213.

The second group of commentators (1216.3 ff.), who may possibly represent the opinion of Amelius,[3] equates time with eternity. These commentators claim that in the second hypothesis (*Parm.* 152 A), the notion that the One participates in Time refers to Eternity. Proclus protests that Plato cannot mean Eternity here, because he uses distinctive temporal expressions, "older than oneself", "younger than oneself", and so on.

The third commentator (1216.15) uses the Neopythagorean identification of the primal god with *kairos*.[4] This position says that the One exists in the level of being superior to eternity, in a state of instantaneousness. Dillon identifies this commentator with Porphyry,[5] who describes the One as beyond Time and Eternity. Porphyry, moreover, fits the bill as this commentator with his description of the primal god (*ho prôtos theos*) as Occasion, the second god, Eternity and the third, Time. The One, meanwhile, exists beyond time and eternity. Proclus dismisses this opinion, remarking that it does not explain the ways that characteristics participate in one another.

The fourth opinion (1216.37) appears to be that of Iamblichus,[6] who postulates an archetypal Time. He argues that the One is not Eternity, and is not established with Time.[7] Time is, instead, the causal principle

[3] Dillon offers Porphyry, Iamblichus, or Amelius as the author of this opinion. Because the third group of commentators represents the opinion of Porphyry, while the fourth that of Iamblichus, I have taken the second group to be that of Amelius, given Proclus' trajectory in offering school opinions. Still, it is perhaps best to defer to Dillon's more cautious and educated identification.

[4] According to Dillon, this is a Neo-Pythagorean deduction from the *Philebus* 66 A, *Politicus* 284 E, and *Laws* IV 709 B. For a discussion on *kairos* as the supreme principle, see Proclus, *In Alc.* 121; Plotinus *Enn.* VI.9.18.44; Damascius, *In Phil.* 253–254 p. 119.

[5] See Proclus, *PT* I, 11 p. 51.4. In his περὶ ἀρχῶν, Porphyry declares the highest aspect of *nous* (the supreme principle) to be προαιώνιος, while *nous* is αἰώνιος. See Dillon (1988) 559, note 81.

[6] Proclus, *In Tim.* III, 30, 30 ff.; see Iamblichus *In Tim.* fr. 63 Dillon.

[7] Simplicius, *In Phys.* I 793, 23 *CAG* (Iamblichus, *In Tim*, fr. 63 Dillon):

"The notion of 'before' and 'after' in this order we do not understand in the sense of changes involving movements, nor in any other such sense, but we define it as the sequence of causes and the continuous combination of generations and primary activity and power which brings motions to fulfilment and as all things of this sort.

Further, we say that Time, and at the same time the Heaven, were not created along with the motion or life proceeding from the soul, but from the intellectual setting-in-order proceeding from the Demiurge; for it is in conjunction with this that Time and the Cosmos are established in him. And indeed the ancient account unequivocally reveals God as ordering and producing Time at the same time as he makes the Heaven. And

of the intellectual order—terms such as "older", "younger" and "the same age" reflect relative levels of intellect.[8] In Simplicius' *Commentary on the Physics*, Iamblichus argues for an ungenerated Now and a time of a higher order than temporal things. The relationship between Time, the soul, and intellect is evident in the following passage:

> "Reasonably time is defined as the moving image of eternity inasmuch as it is modelled upon the intellect and its thoughts are made to resemble the intellections, as the indivisible Now which is in the soul is made to resemble the Now which rests in the One; as the time which encompasses all things in this world is made to resemble the time of the intellectual world which encompasses, simultaneously, and everlastingly, the things which really are ⟨and do not become⟩; as the moving time of this world is modelled upon the static time of the intellectual world, and as the measure of becoming is made to represent the measure of the essences ⟨that really are⟩." (Iamblichus, *In Tim.*, fr. 63 Dillon.)[9]

An intellectual Time exists which transcends the cosmos and measures activities in the world of becoming. This transcendent Time governs the principles of the psychic world, as well. Iamblichus' notion of prehistoric time influences Syrianus' reading of the *Parmenides* on time.

Syrianus starts from Iamblichus' concept that there is a higher kind of Time which relates to the level of divine soul. Adapting the Iamblichean concept that a level of divine souls participate in primal Time, Syrianus says that Time takes its beginning from above and imitates eternity. Syrianus, thus, presents a doctrine on time which is similar to Iamblichus', as both give a non-temporal explanation for the existence of a transcendent Time. While Iamblichus identifies the levels of reality with the noeric realm—time itself is the ordering principle—, Syrianus refers it to levels of divine souls that participate in primal Time—primal time measures the circuits of these souls. He takes the concept of time unfolding eternity and extrapolates a lower level which unravels something contained in a concentrated form at a higher level. In apparent concordance with Iamblichus' concept of transcendent Time as the 'causal principle of the

---

one might declare Time to be a measure, not in the sense of measuring the progress (of the Universe), or of being measured by motion, or of revealing the revolution (of the Heavens), or of being revealed as such, but in the sense of being the cause and one thing uniting all these."

[8] The "older" is superior in essence, "younger" is inferior, and those at the same level of being or those which have the same age, are at the same cosmic level.

[9] Simplicius, *Commentary on the Physics*, p. 41, 10–20. Trans. Sambursky and Pines (1971) 41.

intellectual order' (τὸ τὴς τάξεως τῆς νοερᾶς αἴτιον), Syrianus argues that pure Time acts as the cause for the divine souls of their dance! Syrianus' proposal is thus equivalent to Iamblichus, who suggests an intermediate entity which is superior to ordinary time, lower than *aiōn*, the causal principle of the intellectual world. Proclus, however, disagrees with Syrianus that the lemma refers not just to beings who move cyclically, but all beings in time.[10]

As regards the troublesome "temporal" expressions in the lemma, we know that we are dealing with souls that change or "dance", progressing in their circuits. He proposes the following solution: those which are termed "older" in relation to themselves, those which get more benefit from infinity of time, and those which are "younger" in relation to themselves, participate less in time than those which are below them. That which is younger than itself is more youthful, while those which are older are in relation to intelligible entities and extend in infinity of time.[11] Those equal in age with each other have uniform circuits.

	Older	Younger	The Same Age
Relation to Themselves	Partakes more of infinity	Participates less in time	All souls have the same method of participation and perfection
Relation to Others	The whole measurement of time, measured by a longer circuit	What has its circuit measured by a lesser circumference is younger than what has a larger one (if measured by the moon, with a small circuit, it is younger than what is measured by Saturn, which has a longer circuit)	At the same level—has the same method of participation

Syrianus gives a non-temporal meaning to temporal expressions, just as Iamblichus makes older and younger matters of seniority and prece-

[10] Steel (2009) 220.

[11] For Proclus, the phrases "in relation to themselves" and "in relation to others" direct his understanding of "older" and "younger" in his discussion here. See *In Parm.* 719.7 f., where he says that the higher intelligible orders are older in respect to causes. For a discussion of tense and its relation to Eternity, see Plass (1993).

dence.[12] Proclus, in his account of archetypal time, connects it to the noeric level,[13] just above soul,[14] so that it is not quite time. Proclus adopts the concept of Time as an intellectual entity which is measured by the motion of soul.

Syrianus thus gives a non-temporal meaning of time and lays out three modes of time: eternity, *kairos*, and transcendent Time, which he makes the causal principle of the intellectual order. When Proclus discusses time, however, he does not make time the ordering principle but thinks time orders circuits of souls (which, in turn, order the universe). Syrianus' interpretation is another example of how Syrianus divinizes being in his metaphysics.

[12] See note 6 above.
[13] Simplicius, *Commentary on the Physics*, p. 49, 15 ff.
[14] Simplicius, *Commentary on the Physics*, p. 53, 30.

Proclus, *In Parm.* 1226.22–1227.24

Οὐκοῦν τό γε πρεσβύτερον ἀεὶ νεωτέρου πρεσβύτερον;—[Τί μήν;—Τὸ πρεσβύτερον][a] ἄρα ἑαυτοῦ γιγνόμενον καὶ νεώτερον ἑαυτοῦ ἅμα γίγνεται, εἴπερ μέλλει ἐχειν ὅτου πρεσβύτερον γίγνεται.—Πῶς λέγεις;—ᶻΩδε [*Parm.* 141a7–b3]

Πάλιν οὖν ἡμῖν ἐπὶ τὸν ἡμέτερον καθηγεμόνα τρεπτέον καὶ τὴν ἐκείνου παράδοσιν εἰς μέσον ἀκτέον, φῶς ἀνάπτουσαν εἰς πάντα τὸν προκείμενον λόγον. διττὸν δὴ τὸ χρόνου μετέχον ἐστί, τὸ μὲν οἷον [κατ'][b] εὐθεῖαν ὁδεῦον, καὶ ἀρχόμενόν τε ἀπό τινος καὶ εἰς ἄλλο καταλῆγον, τὸ δὲ κατὰ κύκλον περιπορευόμενον, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ τὴν κίνησιν ἔχον, ᾧ καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ πέρας ἐστὶ ταὐτὸν καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἀκατάληκτος, ἑκάστου τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ἀρχῆς καὶ πέρατος ὄντος, καὶ οὐδὲν ἧττον ἀρχῆς ἢ πέρατος. τὸ δὴ κυκλικῶς ἐνεργοῦν μετέχει τοῦ χρόνου περιοδικῶς, καὶ ἐπειδὴ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πέρας αὐτῷ τῆς κινήσεώς ἐστι καὶ ἀρχὴ, καθ' ὅσον μὲν ἀφίσταται τῆς ἀρχῆς, πρεσβύτερον γίγνεται| καθ'ὅσον δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ πέρας ἀφικνεῖται, νεώτερον γίγνεται· γιγνόμενον γὰρ ἔγγιον τοῦ πέρατος ἐγγύτερον γίγνεται τῆς οἰκείας ἀρχῆς· τὸ δὲ τῆς οἰκείας ἀρχῆς ἐγγυτέρω γιγνόμενον νεώτερον γίγνεται· τὸ ἄρα ἐπὶ τὸ πέρας ἀφικνούμενον κυκλικῶς νεώτερον γίγνεται τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πρεσβύτερον γιγνόμενον· τὸ γὰρ τῷ ἑαυτοῦ πέρατι συνεγγίζον ἐπὶ τὸ πρεσβύτερον πρόεισιν. ᾧ μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ ἄλλο καὶ [τὸ] πέρας, τούτῳ καὶ τὸ νεώτερον ἕτερον ἢ τὸ πρεσβύτερον· ᾧ δὲ ταὐτὸν ἀρχὴ καὶ πέρας, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον νεώτερόν ἐστι {τὸ νεώτερον}[c] ἢ πρεσβύτερον, ἀλλ' ὡς ὁ Πλάτων φησὶν, ἅμα νεώτερον ἑαυτοῦ καὶ πρεσβύτερον γίγνεται· τὸ μὲν γὰρ κατ' εὐθεῖαν κινούμενον οὐκ ἔχει, διότι πέρας καὶ ἀρχὴ διαφέρετον ἐπ' αὐτοῦ, τὸ δὲ κατὰ κύκλον ἔχει τὸ νεώτερον ἑαυτοῦ τῷ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ὡς ἀρχὴν καὶ ὡς πέρας γίγνεσθαι τὴν κίνησιν. πᾶν ἄρα τὸ χρόνου μετέχον, εἰ πρεσβύτερον ἑαυτοῦ γίγνεται, καὶ νεώτερον ἑαυτοῦ γίγνεται· τοιοῦτον δὲ τὸ κυκλικῶς κινούμενον. ὅθεν

[a] **Τί**… **πρεσβύτερον**[2] add. Steel ex Ag PLAT. codd.: om. Σ [b] ***κατ'*** add. Cous[2] secundum g [c] **τὸ νεώτερον** del. Steel ex g

"Does not, then, 'older' always mean older than something younger?" "Obviously." "Well then, whatever is becoming older than itself, must also be at the same time becoming younger than itself, if it is to have something than which it is becoming older." "What do you mean?" "This."

We must therefore turn once again to our Master, and bring to bear upon the problem his discussion, which throws light upon the whole preceding argument. That which partakes in Time is of two sorts; the one which, as it were, proceeds in a straight line, beginning from one point and ending in another; the other which travels round in a circle and pursues its motion from the same point to the same point, so as to have a beginning and an end which are the same and a motion which is unceasing, since each point of its progress is both beginning and end, and is no less a beginning than an end. That, then, which enjoys cyclical activity partakes in Time by circuits, and since the same point is for it both an end and a beginning of motion, in so far as it departs from a beginning, it becomes older, whereas in so far as it arrives at an end, it becomes younger; for as it comes to be nearer to its end, it comes to be nearer to its own beginning; and that which comes to be nearer to its own beginning becomes younger. So then, that which arrives cyclically at its end becomes younger, while at the same time and by the same process also becoming older; for that which draws near to its own end proceeds towards being older; so for that which has a beginning different from its end, becoming younger is different from becoming older; but for that of which its beginning is the same as its end, its youngness is no younger than it is older, but as Plato says, "It becomes simultaneously younger than itself and older." For that which is moved in a straight line does not have this characteristic, because end and beginning are different in its case, whereas that which moves in a circle has the quality of being younger than itself by reason of the fact that its motion comes about in relation to the same point as both beginning and as end. So then, everything that partakes in time, it if becomes older than itself, also becomes younger than itself; and what is of this sort is that which moves in a circle.

εἰκότως ἐθορυβοῦντο καὶ οἱ ἀρχαῖοι μή πῃ σοφισματώδης οὗτος ὁ λόγος ἐστὶν, εἰς τὰ κατ᾽ εὐθεῖαν κινούμενα βλέποντες, δέον διελέσθαι καὶ θεωρῆσαι τίσι μὲν τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ πέρας, τίσι δὲ ἕτερον, καὶ ὅτι νῦν περὶ τῶν θείων ψυχῶν ὁ λόγος, ⟨αἳ⟩[a] καὶ χρόνου μετέχουσι περιοδικὸν ἔχουσαι τὸν χρόνον τῆς οἰκείας κινήσεως, ὥσπερ καὶ τὰ ὀχήματα τὰ ἐξημμένα αὐτῶν.

᾽αλλ᾽ οὗτος μὲν ὁ λόγος τοῦ καθηγεμόνος ἡμῶν.

[a] **αἳ** add. A

Commentary

Syrianus argues that divine souls (and their vehicles) move cyclically, which means that as they approach their end, they also approach their beginning. He applies this psychic circular motion to Plato's premise that something becoming younger than itself also becomes older than itself, and something older than itself becomes younger than itself.

Proclus gives the opinion of three sets of commentators before launching into Syrianus' teaching on the subject.

1. Some commentators (1226.2): dismiss the argument altogether, saying that Plato indulges in sophistry here.
2. Others (1226.4): say the same thing is at the same time younger and older—it is younger with respect to the future, and older with respect to the past. Proclus criticises this argument for concentrating on how something is simultaneously older or younger than another, but not adequately explaining in what way something is simultaneously older and younger than oneself.
3. The third group (1226.12): says that everything is both older and younger than itself; what is now existent is older, what used to be existent is younger. This argument addresses the relative aspects of a thing based on what that thing is at a certain time, so that what is older is older than what used to be younger. Proclus says that this misses the spirit of Plato's argument, which looks at a thing being simultaneously younger and older than itself at one point in time.

For this reason the ancients were understandably disturbed lest this argument be in some way sophistical, since they were looking to things that moved in a straight line, whereas they should have made the distinction and considered what things have the characteristic of having their beginning and end the same, and what have them as different, and they should have considered that the subject of discussion now is divine souls, which partake in time in the respect that they have a periodic time of their proper motion, as indeed do the vehicles which are dependent upon them.

This, then, is the argument of our Master.

To Proclus, Syrianus' opinion is the most credible. He says that souls partake in time through circuits, which results in cyclical motion and time for souls and their vehicles. Souls, thus, moving in circles, are simultaneously younger and older than themselves. For, as soon as they depart from a point, they become older, but simultaneously younger, as they move still closer to their own beginning. As souls move nearer to their end, they move nearer to their beginning, which is spatially next to the end on a circle. Proclus adapts Syrianus' statement on souls in *Platonic Theology* II, 12, p. 71, 13 ff., where he notes that souls are peculiar in so far as they are both younger and, at the same time, older than themselves and other things. He then goes on to state that this phenomenon of being both older and younger occurs because they move according to cyclical time. Proclus, however, takes all of this a step further by saying that the ages of souls themselves are responsible for preserving the measures of time.

Syrianus' discourse on circular motion and *Parmenides* 141 AB is significant, not least for its teaching on the behaviour of souls within Syrianus' metaphysics. That circles and lines have a metaphysical importance beyond their geometrical aspects is evident in Chaldean thought,[1] and certainly reappears in Platonic thought. In his commentary on Euclid's *Elements*, Proclus says that a circle and straight line are two basic types

[1] The Chaldeans held that forms emanate from divine mind to matter through a tireless whirlwind (ἀκοίμητος στροφάλιγξ). Cf. Gersh (1978) 75.

of line based on the fundamental principles of Limit and Unlimitedness (*In Eucl.* 103.21).[2] The circle and circular line correspond to Limit, while the straight line corresponds to Unlimitedness. The spiral is a mixture of Limit and Unlimitedness (*In Eucl.* 104.7 ff.). The behaviour of a line under the influence of Limit and Unlimitedness displays the most elaborate role for lines and circles in the cosmos; looking at the process in another light, the processive and revertive function is, in fact, in the causal process of remaining, procession, and reversion. Gersh makes the case that the three geometrical shapes correspond to the three processes based on Proclus' assertions that the point[3] is most akin to remaining, the line[4] to procession, and the circle[5] to reversion.[6]

This concept is reflected in Proclus' discussion of generation in *In Parm.* 1131:

> "One may also see on the level of generation these two qualities [line and circle]. One may view in the cycle of existence here (for generation returns to itself cyclically, as is written in the *Phaedo* [70 C ff.]) the circular; while the straight one may see in the procession of each thing from its birth to its decline, and the middle here, which is in front of the extremes, as its peak of development."

Based on the *Phaedo*, Proclus argues that the process of generation is a cyclical one in which a being reverts upon itself for regeneration.[7]

The concept of generation is particular to soul—souls are constructed out of straight lines and circles, because circles are only one type of line.[8] In his *Commentary on Euclid*, Proclus says,

> "It is because of the circular revolutions of the heavens that generation returns in a circle upon itself and brings its unstable mutability into a definite cycle. If you divide bodiless things into soul and nous, you will say that the circle has the character of nous, the straight line that of soul. This is why the soul, as it reverts to nous, is said to move in a circle."
> (*In Eucl.* 147.12.)[9]

---

[2] Proclus, *In Eucl.* 103.2 ff.: "There is a line which is finite but does not have points as its limits. The circle is such a line, bending back upon itself and making no use of limits as does the straight line." Trans. Morrow (1970).

[3] Proclus, *In Eucl.* 88.2 ff.; 91.11 ff.

[4] Iamblichus *In Tim.* fr. 49 Dillon; Proclus, *In Eucl.* 108.10–13, 164.8–11.

[5] Proclus, *In Eucl.* 147.3 ff.

[6] Gersh (1978) 73.

[7] Sorabji makes the point that Parmenides was a member of the Pythagorean school and that Pythagorean thought said that everything will happen in cycles, precisely as it is happening now. The universe, though finite, will have no beginning or end. (1983) 107.

[8] Proclus, *In Eucl.* 92.4; *Tim.* 53C–55C.

[9] Trans. Morrow (1970).

That soul moves in a circle because of its revertive tendencies is a common thought in Iamblichus' *de Anima*. The soul, however, moves according to different shapes depending on in what action it is engaged:

> "The demiurgic nous has set up these two principles in himself, the straight and circular, and produced out of himself two monads, the one acting in a circular fashion to perfect all intelligible essences, the other moving in a straight line to bring all perceptible things to birth. Since the soul is intermediate between sensibles and intelligibles, she moves in a circular fashion in so far as she is allied to intelligible nature, but in so far as she presides over sensibles, exercises her providence in a straight line."
> (*In Eucl.* 108.13 ff.)[10]

The soul moves in a straight line when it extends in generation, a circle when it returns during reversion. In this respect, the soul acts as an intermediate, binding together the intelligible and sensible realms.

[10] Morrow (1970).

Proclus, *In Parm.* VII, 517, 25–518, 13 Steel[1]

ἦ δυνατὸν οὖν περὶ τὸ ἓν ταῦθ' οὕτως ἔχειν; οὔκουν ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ. [*Parm.* 142a6–8].

Dicendum autem et ut noster magister, quod abnegationes in entibus exquisite dicuntur esse circa illam rem, circa quam sunt abnegationes, alicubi quidem et specionaliter, alicubi autem solum priuatiue. Puta in exemplo, stationem dicimus non ens—non enim est motus neque identitas neque alteritas—, et motum similiter non ens uocamus; non enim est aliorum entium neque unum. Et totaliter unumquodque entium singulariter quidem ens est, qua ipsum, multipliciter autem non ens, qua ab aliis remotum est. Attamen et si alia abnegamus ab ipso, sed abnegationes circa ipsum sunt mixte aliqualiter affirmationibus. Participat quidem enim et aliorum unoquoque; seruans autem sui ipsius puritatem est quod est. Specionales igitur abnegationes in ipso; nam non ens illud alterum erit; hoc autem species est intellectualis. Ostensum est enim quod *que alterius natura dispartita* facit quod in |illis non ens; hoc autem erat abnegatio.

Iterum in sensibilibus Socratem dicimus neque equum esse neque leonem neque aliorum nullum. Omnium igitur aliorum habet priuationes. Unum enim aliquod ens infinita alia non est, et sunt in ipso omnium priuationes, priuationes entes solum. Non enim participat aliqualiter aliis, sicut in intelligentialibus dicebamus, neque propter puritatem le non participare, sed propter debilitatem materialis et corporalis

[1] This passage, forming part of the last section of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*, only survives in the Latin translation of William of Moerbeke (translated between 1280–1286). Klibansky, who discovered the work, and Labowsky published an edition and English translation of this work, *Parmenides usque ad finem primae Hypothesis nec non Procli Commentarium in Parmenidem pars ultima adhuc inedita interprete Guillelmo de Moerbeka ediderunt praefatione et adnotationibus instruxerunt* (Plato Latinus, vol. III), London 1953. For this passage, I refer to the more recent edition of Steel (1982). Of interest is the Greek retroversion, originally the work of Rumbach, corrected by Steel, and published along with an English translation by Gregory MacIsaac 1997. This retroversion was revised in vol. III, Steel (2009).

Is it possible that all this is true about the one? I do not think so.

Following our Master, we must also say that negative propositions in the sphere of real beings have different meanings according to their subject matter, sometimes a specific significance, sometimes only a privative one. E.g., we say "is not" in speaking of rest because it is not movement or identity or difference, and similarly we say "is not" in speaking of movement because it is not any of the other things; and in general each thing is in a single way, inasmuch as it is itself, but in many ways it is not, inasmuch as it is distinguished from other things. But though we deny other things of it, these negative propositions are in a particular way tied up with the positive propositions. For it does also participate in each of the other things, yet it keeps its own integrity and is what it is. In this case, then, the negative propositions are specific, for not being that, it will be the other; and this will be an intellectual form. For it has been shown that it is the character of difference as distributed in this sphere that makes "not being" true in it; this is what constituted negation here.

On the other hand, in speaking of sensible objects we say that Socrates is not a horse and not a lion, and is not any of the other things, for he lacks all the other characters. For, being one particular thing, he is not an infinite number of others, and in him there are lacks, which are nothing but lacks, of all of those characters. For he does not in a particular way participate in the other things, as we said was true of intelligibles. And this non-participation is not due to the purity of the idea "Socrates," but to the weakness of a material and corporeal subject, which is incapable

ypostaseos non potentis omnibus simul participare entibus. Igitur causa intelligentialibus abnegationes circa ipsa sunt; qui igitur abnegantur et in sensibilibus, ibi quidem specionaliter, hic autem priuatiue.

Que itaque unius abnegationes, non sunt circa unum. Nichil enim totaliter illi adest, neque ut species, neque ut priuatio; sed sicut dicebamus quod nomen hoc, scilicet unum, est eius qui in nobis conceptus, sed non ipsius unius, sic utique dicimus quod et abnegatio circa hunc est, circa illud autem unum nulla est dictarum abnegatiuarum conclusionum; sed exaltatum est propter simplicitatem ab omni oppositione et omni negatione. Merito ergo in fine apposuit quod abnegationes hee non sunt *circa unum*. Aliud enim est esse de uno et aliud esse circa unum. Etenim sermo circa unum quidem non est—indeterminabile enim est—, de uno autem est, ipsum hoc dicentibus nobis quod indicibile. Quare et dicte abnegationes non sunt circa unum, sed de uno. Neque ergo hiis que intelligentialium neque hiis que sensibilium abnegationibus nichil ipse assimilantur. Hee quidem enim circa hec illa sunt quorum utique et sunt abnegationes, hee autem nullatenus sunt circa unum.

of a simultaneous participation in everything. For this reason negative propositions in the intelligible sphere really express something about the predicates. The same holds true also of negative propositions about objects of sense; but in the former case they are specific, while in the latter they are merely privative.

But negative propositions about the One do not really express anything about the One. For nothing at all applies to it, either specifically or privatively, but, as we have said, the name "one" names our conception of it, not the One itself, and so we say that the negation also is about our conception, and none of the negative conclusions that have been stated is about the One, but because of its simplicity, it is exalted above all contrast and all negation. So he rightly added at the end that these negative propositions do not express anything about the One.

It is not the same thing to refer to the One and to express something about the One. The argument does not express anything about the One, for it is indefinable. So the negative propositions that have been stated do not express anything about the One, but do refer to the One. This is why they resemble neither those which occur in the intelligible sphere nor those which are about the objects of sense. For the former are about the same things of which the negations also are predicated, while the latter do not in any way express anything about the One.

Commentary

This fragment assesses the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* and debates what, if anything, can be said of the One—as so often, in response to an *aporia* which raised the question whether this final passage does not in effect nullify the whole previous enquiry.

Proclus gives the replies of two others on the matter. The first group (likely to be Origen the Platonist)[2] says that there is indeed no positive subject of the first hypothesis. This account denies that the One acts as the subject matter of the first hypothesis because the first hypothesis reaches impossible conclusions. When dismissing the first hypothesis, this group of commentators deem the following hypothetical syllogisms impossible: "if the One exists, it is a whole, it has not a beginning, middle, or end, it has no shape", and "it has no existence, is not existence, is not expressible, is not nameable, is not knowable." Proclus replies that this group must attribute some kind of existence to the One because it holds that the One is participated by existence; the One is essentially the same as One-Being or Being. Proclus also criticizes Origen for this opinion in *In Parm.* 1065.1 ff., where he says that the group supposes that "the One in its absolute form is without subject (*anhupostaton*), and that this hypothesis produces impossible conclusions" (1106.31). Proclus' criticism is based on the exegetical doctrine that Plato did not come up with any hypotheses which would lead to impossibilities; instead, Proclus finds Origen's reasoning impossible.

The origin of the whole aporia, then, seems to derive from Origen's account of the One, concerning which there has been much recent discussion.[3] Origen connects the One to the Intellect, thus supporting the negation of the transcendence of the One.[4] In Origen's treatise, *On the First God*, he follows Numenius in making the first God *basileus*—the first principle of the universe, a supreme Intellect, and the second *poietes*—the maker of the universe. In *Platonic Theology* II, 4, Proclus says of those who want to make the Intellect the first principle of all beings,

> "I find marvellous all those commentators of Plato who have admitted the kingship of the intellect over beings, but have not revered the unspoken

[2] Origen the Platonist is attacked for this view by Proclus in *PT* II, 4.
[3] Hadot (1968) 355–375 and Saffrey and Westerink (1974) x–xii.
[4] Saffrey and Westerink (1974) xi.

> transcendence of the One and its transcendent existence over the entire universe, especially Origen who shares in the same teaching as Plotinus." (p. 31, 8–9.)

As with this passage, the mainstay of Proclus' criticism is Origen's failure to make the One transcendent. Based on three key passages from Proclus' *Parmenides Commentary*, Saffrey and Westerink summarise Origen's theory on the relationship between the One and Intellect:[5]

1. The One is entirely without existence or substance (*In Parm.* 1064.21–1066.16);
2. The Intellect is supreme (*In Parm.* VII. 64.1–6);
3. Absolute Being and Absolute One are identical.

For the third summation of Origen's thought, Saffrey and Westerink credit *In Parm.* VII, p. 36.8–31. This section, however, discusses the relationship between the First hypothesis and the henads and seems better identified as Iamblichus, as Dillon notes.[6]

The second opinion, a group of commentators that probably comprises Porphyry, offers a literary solution. Porphyry does not reject the Plotinian One, but regards the first principle as being also the Father of the noetic triad when looked at in its relation to what follows it.[7] Here, Porphyry's proposal to move this statement to the beginning of the second hypothesis may be seen as an aspect of this strategy of linking the two hypotheses more closely.[8] If the Father of the noetic triad is expressible,

---

[5] Saffrey and Westerink (1974) xii.

[6] Dillon (1987) 581, note 99.

[7] Porphyry, *Commentary on the Parmenides* fr. 5 where the One is subject of both hypotheses, although its meaning changes when it is associated with Being. See Bechtle (1999). See also the discussion of this fragment in Dillon and Gerson (2004) 208–210.

[8] The key passage for this occurs in Proclus, *In Parm.* 1070, 25 ff.:

"We shall, therefore, be very far from making the primal god the summit of the intelligible world, as I observe to be the practice of some leading authorities on divine matters, and making the Father of that realm the same as the cause of all things. For this entity is a participated henad. After all, he is called an intelligible Father and the summit of the intelligible world, and even if he is the principle of coherence for the whole intelligible world, yet it is as the Father that he is so. The primal god, however, who is celebrated in the first hypothesis, is not even a father, but is superior also to all paternal divinity. The former entity is set over against its Power and its Intellect, of whom it is said to be the Father, and with those it makes up a single triad, whereas this truly primal god transcends all contrast and relationship with anything, so *a fortiori* is not an intelligible father." Translation Morrow-Dillon (1987). For Porphyry, the Father does not transcend the triad because he is the first member of the triad. Cf. Dillon (1992) 358. Porphyry's doctrine of the One is based on a tension between the One as uncoordinated in one respect, coordinated in

characteristics can be attributed to it. Proclus describes the Porphyrian system as taking the first hypothesis to be about the One above all things,[9] and the second as concerning the intelligible level of being (τὸ νοὴτον πλάτος), without any indication of the complexity of Porphyry's position as postulated here, but we may suspect him of over-simplifying the situation. Proclus puts a positive gloss on Porphyry's position, explaining that he thinks it helps to bridge the gap between the two hypotheses as an opening leading to the second hypothesis.

The third opinion, identified as Iamblichus[10] by Dillon, says that the conclusion contains everything.[11] With his usual method for comparison, Proclus compares Porphyry, whose theory is piecemeal and ethical, with Iamblichus, whose opinion looks towards the metaphysical truths. Iamblichus argues that whenever something is said of the One, this attribute is added to it, putting the One in danger of being "particular something" rather than simply One. To prevent this, Iamblichus says that the One contains all things as their cause. Any negation regarding the One, then, does not mean non-existence, but refers to the One as separate from its effect, but at the same time the cause of all existence.[12]

Syrianus builds on Iamblichus but disagrees in a key area. Iamblichus says that the One is an entity in itself; if anything should be attributed to it, such terms would subtract from and diminish the One. Syrianus, however, says that negative propositions are tied to the positive, in so far as identifying that the One is not, is another way of attributing something

another. For a discussion of being in Porphyry and the One, see Smith (1994) 35–41. Damascius, reporting on Porphyry's interpretation of the One, remarks how Porphyry makes the Father connumerated with the intelligibles and calls the One the Father of the first noetic triad, but as ineffable cause it still surpasses everything (*Dub. Et Sol.* I, p. 86, 9). Porphyry's doctrine of the One is further complicated by the fact that statements in his *Philosophical History* seem to contradict those in Damascius' account (frs. 221–222 Smith). See Hadot (1966) 128–140.

[9] Dillon, who, along with Hadot, identifies the author of *The Anonymous Commentary on the Parmenides* as Porphyry, points to fragment 2 of that work as an example of the One's transcendence over Intellect. While the Intellect is different from the One, One is not different from Intellect. Any traits such as Difference, would compromise the One's simplicity (IV, 5 ff.). Cf. Dillon (1992) 357.

[10] Cf. Proclus, *In Parm.* 1106.31–1108.19 for Proclus' discussion of the One beginning with Amelius, Porphyry and ending with Iamblichus.

[11] Iamblichus posits two Ones, the first a transcendent entity, the second, connected to the henads. For Iamblichus on the One, cf. Proclus, *In Parm.* 1066.17 ff.; Damascius, *de Princip.* I, 43, p. 86.3 ff.

[12] Steel (1999) 356, says that Iamblichus avoids the real problem of the text by taking the ταῦτα to refer, not to the conclusions, but to the attributes listed in the conclusions: "whole", "totality", "in itself", "in rest".

to the One—i.e., negative statements specifically say that the One is other than all these things. At the intelligible level, Syrianus notes that we speak "εἰδητικῶς", meaning that negative statements can be specificatory (on the level of the intelligible), rather than just negative; this approach looks back to the *megista genē* of the *Sophist*,[13] where one type of being "is not to be".[14] At the intelligible level, each form has its own identity, so that we can say "is not" when speaking of rest, because it is not movement, or identity or difference. Each form is different and specific, but still communicates with other forms.[15] Terms trying to characterize the One, then, are specifics that do not affect the integrity of the One.

In this passage, further, Syrianus discusses negation as it relates to sensible objects. On the sensible level, a negative proposition implies a reference to some reality for which we are denying the attributes. Unlike intelligibles, which participate in each other, sensibles, being particular things, are not in another. Syrianus gives the example that Socrates, being a man as a particular thing, is not a horse and not a lion—he lacks the characters of lion and horse. Hence, negation at the sensible level is not specificatory (like the forms, where negations maintains their identity), but privative.

This does not mean that the One is not, it just means that One is other than the listed negatives. The propositions about the One do not express anything about it, rather, they express our conceptions of it, i.e., negations of the One are the negations of our concepts about it. In other words, it seems that Syrianus credits negative statements with the same metaphysical weight as positive statements—both are limited manners of expressing the One.[16] Syrianus distinguishes between referring to the One (περὶ τοῦ ἑνός) and talking about the One (περὶ τὸ ἕν). The construction with the genitive indicates a discussion where the noun in the genitive is the general subject matter, but does not imply anything about the subject matter. The construction with the accusative, however, indicates that something is being said about the subject matter in particular—such an accusative construction is, according to Syrianus, impossible when the

[13] Plato, *Soph.* 255 E: "And we shall say that (the character of difference) pervades all (the forms) …" and 257 E: "The character of difference seems to me to have been parceled out."

[14] On the sensible level, a negative proposition implies a reference to some reality for which we are denying the attributes. Steel (1999) 356.

[15] Steel (1999) 356.

[16] Steel credits Syrianus with being the first to understand 142A6–8 "as a request to deny all negations" (1999) 356.

"One" is the object in the accusative.[17] Steel notes two parallels to Syrianus' unusual distinction between περὶ τοῦ ἑνός and περὶ τὸ ἕν in *In Parmenides* VII, 1191.5–9 and *Platonic Theology* II, 8. p. 55.[18] In the first passage, Proclus says,

> "For that in fact we say nothing in the proper sense about the One (ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς), we will hear the philosopher demonstrating a little later. Nevertheless, we do talk about it (περὶ αὐτοῦ) because of the natural striving of the soul towards the One (περὶ τὸ ἕν)."

The first use of the genitive with ἐπὶ is rather like Syrianus' use of περὶ with the genitive, in so far as it indicates the impossibility of a discussion about real qualities of the One. The second preposition, that of the genitive with περὶ however, is equivalent to Syrianus' use of περὶ τὸ ἑνός in line 630; it indicates a discussion that merely refers to the One—such a discussion is entirely possible. The last use of a preposition with One, περὶ τὸ ἕν, is similar to ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς, as it indicates a discussion about the nature of the One, which is impossible. This last prepositional use is attached to the soul's revertive journey to the One; it is described using the accusative construction as the soul's return is towards the One's absolute Nature (see Proclus, *In Parm.* 74.3). In *Platonic Theology* II, 8, p. 55,[19] Proclus says,

> "It is impossible to describe the One because it is indescribable, but whatever you may say, you will say something and you will talk of it (περὶ ἐκεινῆς) but not express it itself."[20]

Use of περὶ and the genitive denotes general reference to the One, but not a discussion of its qualities—hence, this usage is similar to Syrianus' mode of describing speech and the One. Syrianus concludes: first, that the statements do not mean that the One is not; rather, the One is other than the listed negations. Second, Syrianus says that propositions about

---

[17] For a grammatical explanation of this passage, see Steel (1999) 357. Steel says that the construction with the genitive is used for titles of works, e.g., "on the soul" and in the treatise of the sophist Gorgias, "περὶ οὐδενός" "on nothing." Klibansky and Labowsky translate περὶ plus the accusative as expressing something about the One (1953) 357–358.

[18] Steel (1999) 358.

[19] In Proclus, *PT* II, 55, 23 Proclus uses περί and the accusative (prefaced by alpha-privative) to describe how discourse on the One is limited as it is "ἀπερίγραφον". According to Saffrey and Westerink, this word is rare in negative theology and appears in the following passages: Proclus, *In Parm.* 51.18, *In Tim.* I, p. 371.13, *De Decem dub.* § 10.25 *incircumscriptibilem*; *De prov.* § 65.10 *incircumscriptibile*. See Proclus, *PT* II, p. 112, note 4.

[20] Trans. Steel (1999) 358.

the One do not express anything about the One, but are merely our conceptions of it.

Other explanations for this lemma follow this section; however, they do not appear to be attached to Syrianus. Proclus lists the following solutions, based in part on Syrianus' explanation to the problem, (summarized in *Platonic Theology* II,12):

1. 72.23 ff.: Proclus interprets the phrase, "these things are not possible (δυνατόν)" to indicate that the One cannot be credited with the power (δύναμις) of generation, since it transcends such an activity.
2. 74.3 ff.: This solution shows how the soul approaches the One through a mystical ascent in which it must leave behind dialectical enterprise.

Damascius, *De Princ.* ch. 48, II p. 17, 1–17 W-C

ἕν εἰ ἔστιν, ἆρα οἷόν τε αὐτὸ εἶναι μέν, οὐσίας δε μὴ μετέχειν; οὐκ οἷόν τε. [*Parm.* 142B5–6].

Ἄλλο μὲν τὸ ἡνωμένον, ἄλλο δὲ τὸ ἕν, ὡς δείκνυσι Πλάτων καὶ ἡ κοινὴ ἔννοια προσαπαιτεῖ. τὸ γὰρ ἡνωμένον τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν οἷον πεπονθὸς τὸ ἕν. αὐτὸ δὲ ὃ μόνον ἓν ὑπάρχει ὑπὲρ τὸ ἡνωμένον· οὐ μέντοι ἀπέσπασται τὸ ἕτερον τοῦ ἑτέρου παντελῶς, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἑνὸς μετέχει τὸ ἡνωμένον. ἔχει τινὰ ἄρα μεταξὺ τῶν δύο σχέσιν θεωρουμένην, οἷον σύνδεσιν τῶν ἄκρων ταῦτα ἐφεξῆς· τὸ ἡνωμένον, ἡ σχέσις, τὸ ἕν, καὶ ὑπὲρ τὸ ἓν ἔσται μία ἀρχή, τὸ ἄρρητον. αἱ δὲ λεγόμεναι δύο ἕν τε καὶ ἡ σχέσις, ἥ ἐστιν ἡ δύναμις (πρώτη γὰρ ἡ δύναμις σχέσεων ἁπασῶν)· τρίτον δὲ ὁ νοῦς καὶ ὅπερ ὂν ἀνυμνοῦμεν. ’αλλ’ αὕτη μὲν ἡ ἀπόδειξις Συριανῷ τε καὶ Πρόκλῳ γέγραπται εἰς τὸν| Παρμενίδην· τὸ γὰρ ἕν ἐστίν ἐν ἀρχῇ τιθέμενον τῆς δευτέρας ὑποθέσεως τὴν τριάδα σημαίνειν.

If the one is, can it be and not partake of being? No, it cannot.

The Unified is one thing, the One, another, as Plato shows, and as common opinion demands as well. For the Unified is something such as has oneness as an attribute, while that which is simply One exists prior to the Unified. The one, however, is not detached from the other completely, but the Unified participates in the One. There is, then, a certain relation perceived between the two, as it were a binding together of the extremes, these things forming a sequence: the Unified, the Relation, the One, and beyond the One there will be a unique principle, the Ineffable. The things that are spoken of as two are the One and the relation, which is potency (for this potency is the first of all bonds.) Third comes Intellect and the very thing which we celebrate as Being. This is the exegesis presented by Syrianus and Proclus in their commentary on the *Parmenides*; for the expression "the One is", placed in the beginning of the second hypothesis, signifies this triad.

Commentary

Damascius, in discussing the number of principles which exist before the noetic triad, comes to the lemma in *Parmenides* 142B5–6: "ἕν εἰ ἔστιν, ἆρα οἷον τε αὐτὸ εἶναι μέν, οὐσίας δε μὴ μετέχειν;"—the opening of the Second Hypothesis. Here, he explains that the subject of the second hypothesis is the One as the unified principle, the lowest element of the henadic realm and highest of the noetic realm.[1] He presents Syrianus' interpretation of this, which amounts to a description of the first hypostasis in the form of two triads: 1) the One, the unified (*henomenon*) and the bond between them; and 2) the unified, *nous* and the bond between them.

Syrianus first presents the relationship between the One and the Unified; while the two are separate entities, they are related in so far as the unified participates in the One. This participation is a relation between the two, relating the two extremes of the One—the pure One at the summit, while the unified One functions at the lowest point, which is also the highest level of the noetic realm.[2] This *henomenon* is a unified product of the *syndesis*. Beyond the One is an ineffable principle. Whether Syrianus actually presents a doctrine of two Ones seems rather doubtful, as we do not hear about it in other writings. It is possible, then, that either Damascius deliberately interpolates his own concept of the One into his discussion of Syrianus, or that he is presenting two aspects of the One—One as immanent, relating to the henadic world, and One as transcendent.

The triad presented here bears a resemblance to Iamblichus' picture of the One (which Damascius likewise borrows from Iamblichus). In *Dub. et Sol.* 43 (I p. 86, Ruelle), Damascius presents Iamblichus' theory of the two Ones: the first One is ineffable, the second One presides over the dyad of Limit and Unlimitedness. In ch. 51 (I 103, 6ff.), Damascius says the following of Iamblichus' One:

---

[1] Damascius' first intelligible triad occurs in a number of passages in *De Princ.*, especially in 117 (iii. 132–137): *De prim. princ.* 117 (iii.132.21–22). The first intelligible triad is marked by the unity between its three parts, which makes it, on the one hand similar to aspects of unity within the trinity of the Cappadocian Fathers, but still quite different as the henadic realm transcends distinction. Dillon discusses the *henomenon* as the ultimate moment of the henadic realm in (1997) 178.

[2] See Proclus, *PT* III, 24, p. 15.14–20 where Proclus discusses the triad in the beginning of the second hypothesis, whereby One is connected with Being via One-Being. Proclus seems to adapt Syrianus' view as depicted in this passage.

> "For, indeed the one first principle is prior to the two; and this is the "simply One", which Iamblichus postulates in between the two first principles and that absolutely ineffable (first principle). These two principles may be termed Limit and the Unlimited, or if one wishes, One and Many, the 'One' here to be taken as 'One' as opposed to 'Many', not the One which is prior to both these and has nothing opposed to it."[3]

Dillon notes that the *henomenon* is the *mikton* resulting from the union of *peras* and *apeiria*.[4] Damascius, likewise, posits the following chain: the Ineffable, the One, Limit-Unlimit, followed by the unified. As in Iamblichus' chain, there is no relationship between the ineffable and the unified.

Damascius next shifts the argument to report a second triad (17, 11 ff.): *henomenon*, and Being, and the relationship (*skhesis*) between the two. Damascius reports that Syrianus calls the relationship a *dynamis*, which acts as the second "person". He also reports that the third person, Being, can be called *nous*. This second trinity of Syrianus', then, resembles that which is found in Porphyry's doctrine of the One.

In *Dub. et Sol.* ch. 43 (I 86, 8 Ruelle), Damascius presents Porphyry on this triad, reporting that "the single first principle of all things is the Father of the noetic triad".[5] This refers to Porphyry's doctrine of the One as the Father of the intelligible triad of Being, Life, and Intellect and as the One, generator of all being. The head of the noetic world is the Father who is also the One, viewed in a different way. Porphyry's first hypostasis is a condensed version of what later becomes expanded into several layers, as we see in Syrianus's metaphysics. Dillon notes in his paper, "What Price the Father of the Noetic Triad? Some Thoughts on Porphyry's Doctrine of the First Principle"[6] that Syrianus' triad differs from this Porphyrian One in so far as it is tempered by the first triad Syrianus mentions: One, *henomenon*, *skhesis*. Thus, by juxtaposing the two triads he makes clear that the *henomenon*, as first principle (or father) of the noetic triad, is not the pure One, in which it participates. Dillon also notes that *dynamis*, the *skhesis* between One (*henomenon*) and Being (*nous*), functions as a generative force which allows for creation, which Being, or Intellect, as a reflective element, cannot provide.

---

[3] Trans.: Dillon (1973) 31.

[4] See Dillon (1973) 31. See Proclus, *In Tim.* I, 78, 6 f., on Iamblichus and the second One and the Dyad of *peras* and *apeiria*.

[5] Translation Dillon (1973).

[6] Dillon (2007) 53.

Damascius, *In Parm.* ch. 238, II p. 75, 18–22 W-C

ἀλλ᾽ εἴπερ γέ, οἶμαι, ἔστιν, ἀνάγκη αὐτὸ ἀεί, ἕωσπερ ἂν ᾖ, ἕν γέ τι εἶναι, μηδὲν δὲ ἀδύνατον. [*Parm.* 144c4–5].

Ἕνατον, τί τὸ ἕν γέ τι σημαίνει, καὶ τὸ τὶ προσκείμενον; Ἆρα ὅτι ἀντίκειται τῷ οὐδὲν τὸ τί ὡς Πορφύριος, ἢ ὅτι τὸ τί δηλοῖ τὸ μεθεκτὸν ἕν. εἰ[a] γὰρ ἓν τὸ ἀμέθεκτον τὸ μεθεκτὸν τί ἕν· ἅμα γὰρ τί καὶ μεθεκτόν, ὃ σημαίνει τὸ τί, ὡς ὁ φιλόσοφος Συριανός.

[a] **εἰ** Westerink: **ἀεὶ** A

Commentary

In his commentary on *Parmenides*144 C 5, Damascius asks what is meant by One with a 'some' added to it (ἕν γε τι), a ninth question in a series of ten questions on 143A4–144 C 8, which Damascius takes to be a discourse on the summit of the noetic-noeric realm. *In Parm.* 112.16 represents Damascius' enquiry into the significance of the τι. In a scholastic analysis of τι, Damascius accepts Syrianus' solution that this "some" when added to the One seems to be specificatory. Damascius first cites Porphyry's opinion, saying that the some (One) is opposite to saying that it is nothing—this is dismissed as too simple.[1] Next, he gives Syrianus' opinion, that the "some" indicates a participated One.

[1] Westerink notes (1997) 142, lines 18–20, p. 75 a parallel attributed to Porphyry (= fr. 171 Smith, 197). Here, the "some One", an affirmative, has its contradiction with "the not some One", the universal negative, in this sense οὐ τι. See Hadot (1968) 102–103; 175; 177 and note 3; Dillon (1973) 393 and Iamblichus, *In Parm*, fr. 4 Dillon. Dillon says that the interpretation of Porphyry gives the literal sense of the expression 'ἕν γε τι.' Porphyry considers this phrase in opposition to what immediately follows in the text of Plato (*Parm.* 144 C 4–5).

But if there is, it must, I imagine, so long as it is, be some one thing; it cannot be nothing.

Ninthly, what is the significance of "some one at least" (*ge*) and specifically the "some" which is attached? Is it that the "some" is opposed to "nothing", as Porphyry says? Or is it that the "some" indicates the participated One? For if the One is imparticipable, the participated is "some One". For it is at the same time "some" and "participated" that is signified by the "some", as the philosopher Syrianus [says].

Syrianus argues that τι indicates a participated One (μέθεκτον). He says that if the unparticipated One is One simply, then the participated One must be "some One". The "some One" and the participated One are thus synonymous, according to Syrianus. Thus, Syrianus shows that the One can be simple or participated, in so far as the participated One is participated in by Being, for instance.

In p. 75, 22 ff., Damascius quotes Iamblichus on this topic, who sees the τι as signifying a particular One.[2] It is rather difficult to see what the difference is between them—Iamblichus gives a more detailed analysis, explaining the process of individualisation leading to the world of individuals. Iamblichus says that following "simply each thing", there is a particular x—after "simply One", there is the "particular One". These particular ones should be applied, each particular one to its corresponding particular being. This theory relates to the Iamblichean concept of the henads, each individual henad having an analogue in every sphere of existence, here the sphere of being. The "some", then, qualifies how the One refers to a henadic entity.

[2] Dillon uses this fragment as Iamblichus, *In Parm.* fr. 4 Dillon. Cf. Iamblichus' comments on 142a above, pp. 297–298. He dismisses τι there also.

The question of how Damascius gains access to this teaching of Syrianus is of interest. While he usually quotes Syrianus with Proclus, in this fragment he bypasses Proclus, instead using Syrianus before he relays further information about Iamblichus. It appears that Damascius is doing either one of two things here: 1) either he has access to commentaries of Syrianus unavailable to us or 2) he could, as modern commentators of the Platonists do, infer from Proclus' text whom Proclus is referring to, and present those names as if they were stated in the text itself. In addition, if Damascius were supposed to be using a commentary of Syrianus', this would prove that there was such a commentary—alas, however, this is just speculation.

Damascius, *In Parm.* ch. 270, III, p. 11, 5–13 W-C

ᾗ μὲν ἄρα τὸ ἓν ὅλον, ἐν ἄλλῳ ἐστίν· ᾗ δὲ τὰ πάντα μέρη ὄντα τυγχάνει, αὐτὸ ἐν ἑαυτῷ· καὶ οὕτω τὸ ἓν ἀνάγκη αὐτό τε ἐν ἑαυτῳ εἶναι καὶ ἐν ἑτερῳ. [*Parm.* 145e 3–5].

Βέλτιον οὖν τὴν τοῦ φιλοσόφου Συριανοῦ θαυμασίαν ἐπιβολὴν ἐκδέχεσθαι, ὡς τριῶν οὐσῶν ἐπιστροφῶν ἡ μὲν πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον οὐδὲν προσήκει τῷ νῷ (ἄλλως τε φαίη ἂν καὶ τῷ Κρόνῳ)·

> οὐ γὰρ ἐς ὕλην πῦρ ἐπέκεινα τὸ πρῶτον ἑὴν δύναμιν κατακλείει·

ἡ δὲ εἰς ἑαυτὸν καὶ εἰς τὸ κρεῖττον καὶ πάνυ ἴδιος· ὧν τὴν μὲν ἡ ἐν αὐτῷ, τὴν δὲ ἡ ἐν ἄλλῳ δηλοῖ κατηγορία, καὶ δὴ διὰ τοῦτο κρεῖττον εἶναι τὸ ἐν ἄλλῳ τοῦ ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

Commentary

This discussion of "in itself and in another" is part of Damascius' sixth question on *Parmenides* 145B6–E6, which represents, in Syrianus' system, the first intellective order. In his discussion on the sixth question, Damascius contrasts his interpretation with that of Proclus, whom he dismisses, preferring the view of Syrianus, who understands the text be a discourse on the first order of the intellectuals; not only is the intellectual cosmos demiurgic, but the Demiurge contains within himself all the elements of the universe.[1]

[1] Opsomer gives an account of how Proclus connects the Demiurge (who imparts intellect to the cosmos) with intellect (2000) 17.

Then the one, inasmuch as it is a whole, is in other; and inasmuch as it is all its parts, it is in itself; and thus one must be both in itself and in other.

Therefore, it is better to accept the excellent notion of the philosopher Syrianus that there being three types of conversion, that which turns towards the worse is not suitable to Intellect—otherwise, as he might say of Kronos:

> "For the primary fire which is beyond does not enclose its power as far as Matter." (*Or. Chald*. Fr. 5)

But the conversion into itself and into the better is entirely proper to him; and of these the former is categorised by "in itself", while the latter is categorised by "in another", and indeed for this reason is superior to the "in itself."

Damascius discusses Proclus, who he says has already refuted the older commentators. In p. 11, 3–5 Proclus says that "in itself" refers to the implacable order of gods (ἀμέιλεκτοι) (see *In Parm*. fr. 14 below).

Damascius gives a thorough exposé of Proclus' statement on the implacable gods in his response to the third question.[2] Here, Damascius critiques Proclus' divine hebdomad, which Damascius refuses to find in the *Parmenides*. Proclus' interpretation focuses on the Demiurge, taking a broad approach to the intellective universe, which is demiurgic as the Demiurge contains within him all orders of the universe. For this passage, the association of Kronos with "in another" is notable, as Damascius keeps this identification.

[2] Damascius, *In Parm*. III. p. 7.13 ff.

Damascius' interpretation of Proclus seems to have been borrowed either directly from *Platonic Theology* V, 37 p. 136.20–137.5 and VI, 21 p. 95.1–7, or is based on the teachings imparted there. In this chapter, Proclus argues that there are two kinds of reversion:[3] to self and to another. Reversion to another is considered superior to reversion to self because reversion to another always implies reversion to a higher entity.[4] This argument is based on Proclus' premise that divine entities can only revert to higher entities, which means that when they are in another, they are actually partaking in a higher rank.[5] Kronos, the intellectual father and primal intellect, reverts to those above him because they contain the powers which he uses. Proclus elaborates that "in another" is excellent because an entity pertains to a higher entity as a whole, while an entity pertains to itself only in parts.

Damascius finds it better to accept the opinion of Syrianus, who gives a more metaphysical interpretation than that of his student. Syrianus says that "in itself" and "in another" refer to three types of *epistrophē* proper to the summit of the noetic world: towards the inferior, towards itself, and towards the superior.[6] Damascius reports that Syrianus says that the first, inferior type of reversion has nothing to do with intellect, citing the transcendence of Kronos. He quotes the *Oracles* (*Or. Chald.* 5.1–3 p. 13 Majercik), to the effect that the first principle is not immediately related to matter and reversion is to oneself and other. Syrianus thus interprets "in oneself" as signifying *epistrophē* towards oneself—Nous reverts towards being and to self, but also to something higher. What Plato means by "in another", according to Syrianus, is reversion towards something higher—"in another" is the superior reversion. Although Damascius reports that

[3] Proclus, *PT* V, 37.19 ff.

[4] Proclus, *ET* 131–132: "anything which reverts may revert either upon itself or upon the superior principle." Trans. Dodds (1963).

[5] Proclus, *In Alc.* 20.7: "But reversion to the inferior is a misfortune of the soul that has 'shed its wings' and fallen into forgetfulness both of itself and at the same time of what precedes it; whereas reversion both upon self and upon the superior principle occurs not only in souls but also among the divine beings"; and further, 12 ff.: "Parmenides informs us, positing two kinds of reversion, and showing how on the one hand the divine is turned back upon itself and exists in itself, and how on the other hand it reverts to what precedes it, in which respect it is both embraced with another and united with the superior grade of being." Trans. O'Neill (1965).

[6] Cf. Proclus, *In Alc.* 20.8–13: "Now there are three kinds of reversion: everything that reverts either reverts to what is inferior to itself by falling away from its own perfection, or is elevated to what is superior through its own life and natural activity, or reverts upon itself according to the knowledge that is coordinate itself, and the middle form of movement." Trans. O'Neill (1965).

Syrianus lists three kinds of reversion, he focuses on two which are most important for divine kinds:[7] reversion to self and reversion to another. This is certainly in line with what we hear about Syrianus from Proclus in *Platonic Theology* V, 37, where Proclus reports Syrianus' statement on divine beings existing "in itself" and "in another". Syrianus says that "another" pertains to the first triad as the source of paternal power. All intellectual gods are united to the intelligible-intellectual gods as they revert back to them.

Damascius corrects this (μήποτε), arguing that "not in itself" should not mean something superior but refers to the relationship towards inferior things. This reversion to inferior things marks Kronos' (father of first noeric triad) reversion to himself and thus begins the reversion to inferior things to which Kronos relates in a transcendental way (p. 11 15–17). Damascius thus alters Syrianus' account in two ways: 1) he places Kronos in the category of "in another" only, as opposed to Syrianus, who places him in the categories of—what he calls—the second and third reversions (both "in itself" and "in another" respectively); 2) Damascius identifies "in another" with the reversion to lower things.

This fragment also provides a nice comparison between Syrianus' teaching on a topic and Proclus'. Chiefly, Syrianus' discussion on reversion starts off with three categories, although the teaching quickly focuses on the last two kinds, reversion "in itself" and "in another". By the time we get to Proclus, the first of the three reversions has been abandoned and we hear about two, both in Damascius' account of Proclus and in Proclus' *Platonic Theology*, although the three reversions do crop up in Proclus' *Commentary on the Alcibiades*.

[7] Proclus, *In Alc.* 20.9–10: "… as Parmenides informs us, positing two kinds of reversion, and showing how on the one hand the divine is turned back upon itself and exists in itself, and how on the other hand, it reverts to what precedes it…" Trans. O'Neill (1965).

Damascius, *In Parm.* ch. 282, III p. 41, 1–7 W-C

ἀνάγκη ἄρα τὸ ἕν, αὐτό τε ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἀεὶ ὂν καὶ ἐν ἑτερῳ, ἀεὶ κινεῖσθαί τε καὶ ἑστάναι. [*Parm.* 146a6–7].

Ἀλλὰ τίς ἡ στάσις καὶ τίς ἡ κίνησις; τοῦτο γὰρ ἦν τέταρτον τῶν προβεβλημένων. Ἆρα ἡ στάσις ὁ ἀμείλικτος, ὅς[a] ἔστι τούτου τοῦ νοῦ; ἔσται ἄρα κίνησις μόνον ἡ ζωογόνος [ἡ][b] θεός; καίτοι ὡς καὶ πρόσθεν ἐλέγομεν, ἑκάστη ἀντίθεσις ἑκάστου ἑνὸς κατηγορεῖται. βέλτιον ἄρα ὡς ὁ φιλόσοφος Συριανός ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ νοῦ ἑκάτερον ἀκούειν, ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἀνάγκη τὸ κινούμενον ἑστὸς οὕτω κινεῖσθαι· καὶ ἔστιν ἀντὶ μὲν τοῦ ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὸ ἑστάναι, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ ἐν ἄλλῳ τὸ κινεῖσθαι.

[a] **ὅς** Westerink: **ὡς** (in ras.) A [b] **ἡ** del. Westerink.

Commentary

This regards question four on rest and motion: 'what is rest and motion and which is superior.' This fragment is connected to *In Parm.* fr. 14a below, which is a fragment from question four of the same lemma.

Damascius offers Proclus' response first:

> "Is *stasis* the implacable god who is attached to this Intellect? Will motion be only the vivifying goddess?"

According to Proclus, rest represents the implacable level of gods,[1] while motion refers to Rhea, the vivifying deity. Damascius criticises this, claiming that each opposition must be attributed to both causes, whereas

[1] Proclus, *PT* V, 38, p. 142.1–19.

Then the one, being always in itself and in other, must always be in motion and at rest.

But, what then is repose or movement? This was the fourth among the problems. Is repose the implacable god, who is attached to this Intellect? And so will motion be only the vivifying goddess? And yet, as we said earlier, each opposition is affirmed of each one. Better then, as the philosopher Syrianus [said], to understand that motion and rest refer to the same intellect, since it is necessary that the thing being moved is moved after having been in repose; and it is possible to relate being 'in itself' to 'repose' (or 'motion'), and being 'in another' to motion.

Proclus divides the antithesis, attributing one to one level of Being, another to another.[2]

Next, we have Syrianus' solution the problem: it is better to understand rest and motion as referring to the same intellect. This solution says that both rest and motion refer to the primal intellect, just viewed in a different way. Rest refers to "in oneself", while motion to "in another", but both to Kronos as the primary intellect. Such a connection is possible, he further explains, because what is moved is moved from a state of repose. This connection of all levels of being is found in Iamblichus' explanation of "in itself" and "in another", which is referred to as two aspects of one thing. Iamblichus' explanation of "in itself" and "in another", as reported by Damascius in the thirteenth problem, unites both as describing the Intellect:

[2] Westerink and Combès (2002) 211, note 5.

> "… and the phrase 'itself in itself and in another' demonstrates the synthesis of the antithesis; for 'in itself' and 'in another' are not two states, but the two are one, and the dyad here a monad, and what is 'in itself' is 'in another'; and what is 'in another' is 'in itself'; for thus does the great Iamblichus draw the whole antithesis into one unified conception."[3]

It seems that Syrianus, in this respect, follows Iamblichus' line of argument, while Proclus deviates from the teaching of his master on the subject. Combès notes Syrianus' similarity to Iamblichus, and attributes Proclus' separation of the Parmenidean opposites as an innovation meant to conform better to his demiurgic hebdomad.[4]

Damascius suggests the following solution, introducing an additional complexity:

> "Perhaps, the primal intellect was of the unique form, of the indivisible and of the substantial form, as expressed by the substance of the intellect, but the second in proceeding and being divided from itself is vital, is seen to be the sort subsisting in procession and on account of this it is in motion and in repose, just as the third, the entire procession of intellect already having come forward, is differentiated in sameness and otherness. But the second is differentiated in repose and in motion, but the first is undifferentiated, as is said of *nous*, consisting in a unified division."[5]

Damascius argues that: 1) the primal intellect is both unitary and essential and 2) that motion and rest can be viewed more distinctly with respect to Rhea, not Kronos.

---

[3] Damascius, *Dub et Sol.* II, 147, 34–37 (= Iamblichus, *In Parm.* fr. 5b Dillon). Trans. Dillon (1973).

[4] Damascius, *In Parm.* III, p. 231, note 4.

[5] (= Iamblichus, *In Parm.* fr. 5b Dillon). Trans. Dillon (1973).

Damascius, *In Parm.* ch. 278, III p. 34, 12–16

Δεύτερον δέ, εἰ ἐν τῷ δημιουργῷ τὰ γένη τοῦ ὄντος ἵδρυται, ὡς ἠξίου ὁ μέγας Ἰάμβλίχος, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ὁ τούτου ὀπαδὸς Συριανός, ὡς νῦν ἱστορεῖ καὶ αὐτός, τῷ καθηγεμόνι συνέπεσθαι ὁμολογῶν, καίτοι ἄλλοθι πολλαχοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ ταῦτα τιθέμενος.

Commentary

This addresses *Parmenides* 145 E 7–146A8–being in motion and at rest. While it is not immediately obvious what the γενή τοῦ ὄντος have to do with motion and rest, both concern the middle order, making it necessary to inquire about the Parmenidean categories of the genres of being. Namely, are Sameness and Otherness genera of being, and if so, are they in the Demiurge or superior to the Demiurge? I have added an "a" to the numbering of this fragment, for one, to connect it with its corollary, but also to qualify it: while Syrianus appears here, he appears in a most ambiguous way—a situation not helped by the fact that Syrianus does not appear in Damascius' answer to the question.

Regarding the middle order of the intellective world, Damascius poses fifteen questions on the characteristics proper to the middle triad. The second of these questions asks if the genera of being are established in the demiurge. Damascius first states the opinion of Iamblichus, followed by that of Syrianus: Damascius makes clear that Syrianus is a follower of Iamblichus, and bases this relationship on Proclus' authority. Syrianus here is said to agree with Iamblichus, which is, to Proclus, an unusual proposition; Proclus neither links his teacher with Iamblichus, nor does he represent Syrianus approving of Iamblichus by name. For Iamblichus on this question, Dillon outlines Iamblichus' view of the Demiurge in his collection of Iamblichus on the *Timaeus*. In *In Tim.* fr. 34 Dillon,

The second question is whether the classes of Being are established in the Demiurge, as was the view of the great Iamblichus, and indeed also of his follower Syrianus, as he himself (sc. Proclus) now tells us, admitting that he is following his master, although in many contexts he places them also in the realms above the Demiurge.[1]

Iamblichus describes how the Demiurge embraces within himself the genera of being, as he comprises the whole noetic world.[2]

The "αὐτός" in line 4 is ambiguous, although I, like Dillon, assume it refers to Proclus,[3] this being Damascius' way of referring to him.

Damascius' reply is much more complicated and it is difficult to say whether Syrianus is in the background of the metaphysics presented here. Damascius says that genera of being are in both the intelligible-intellective realm and in the intelligibles themselves. While all exists in the Demiurge (who comprises Intellect), each appears in different ways the various realms. This, presumably, is a modification of Proclus' proposition that the One exists in all things, and each receives it according to its own capacity. Most importantly, while Damascius' reply actually refers to Proclus, the fragment is important because it indicates either that Damascius has access to Syrianus through Proclus or that he has access to a commentary by Syrianus.

---

[1] Trans. Dillon (1973). Damascius, *Dub. et Sol*. II 149, 25 ff. (= Syrianus, *In Parm*. 14a Wear).

[2] Cf. Proclus, *PT* V, 30, p. 112.16–20.

[3] Dillon (1973) 396.

Damascius, *Dub. et Sol.* section 402, III p. 259.1–4

τὸ ἓν εἰ ἔστιν οἷον διεληλύθαμεν, ἆρ᾽ οὐκ ἀνάγκη αὐτό, ἕν τε ὂν καὶ πολλὰ καὶ μήτε ἓν μήτε πολλὰ καὶ μετέχον δρόνου, ὅτι μεν ἔστιν ἕν, οὐσίας μετέχειν ποτέ, ὅτι δ᾽ οὐκ ἔστι, μὴ μετέχειν αὖ ποτε οὐσίας; ἀνάγκη. [*Parm* 155e, 4–8].

τὸ τοίνυν πέμπτον ἤδη μεν καὶ αὐτῷ μοι ἐδόκει, εὕρισκον δε καὶ τὸν φιλόσοφον Συριανὸν βουλόμενον καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ὑποθέσις καὶ τὰ ἄρθρα διαιρεῖ, ὥσπερ τὴν δευτέραν· εἰπὼν δε ἀπέλειπεν τὴν διαίρεσιν. Μήποτε οὖν ἕξ εἴδη ψυχῶν ἐν τούτοις παραδίδωσιν ὁ Παρμενίδης.

Commentary

Damascius discusses the third hypothesis, a commentary on *In Parm.* 155 E, the One which is one and many and neither one nor many in time. More particularly, Damascius is likely commenting on Proclus' lost commentary on the third hypothesis, summarised in *In Parm.* 1063.[1] Damascius follows Proclus in identifying the subject matter of the third hypothesis as the realm of the particular soul.[2] In this fragment, Damascius

[1] "As for the third, it is not about all Soul pure and simple, but such as have proceeded forth from the divine Soul; for the whole divine Soul is comprised in the second hypothesis. For Plato himself has clearly stated that the One partakes also of Time; and partaking of Time is the property first of souls, and not of intellectual beings, among whom there is neither 'was' nor 'will be', but the eternal 'is'." Trans. Dillon (1987).

[2] Iamblichus differs from most of the post-Plotinian philosophers by identifying the subject of the third hypothesis as the 'superior classes', that is, intermediate beings such as angels and daemons. Damascius' interpretation of the third hypothesis is summarised in section § 398 of *Dub. et Sol.*, where the *skopos* is Proclus' interpretation, that the "soul descends to becoming and ascends out of becoming."

If the one is, such as we have described it, being both one and many and neither one nor many, and partakes of time, must it not, because one is, sometimes partake of being and again, because one is not, sometimes not partake of being? Yes, it must.

On the fifth question I already had my own view, but I discovered that the philosopher Syrianus proposed to divide up the other hypotheses and their sections, just as he had the second one, but having said that, he abandoned the division. So we may suggest that Parmenides proposes the six classes of souls in this passage.

---

credits Syrianus with wishing to divide the third hypothesis like the second and for identifying levels of the psychic realm, but laments that he does not seem to have delivered on this promise. Regarding Syrianus' philosophy, this fragment is interesting as it indicates that Syrianus at least envisaged multiple levels of Soul, even if he did not have the energy to pursue the matter.

ABBREVIATIONS OF WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

i) Damascius

Dub. et Sol.	*Dubitationes et Solutiones in Platonis Parmenidem*, ed. C.A. Ruelle, (Paris, 1899)
In Parm.	*Commentaire du Parménide de Platon*, ed. L.G. Westerink and J. Combès. 3 vols. (Paris, 2002)
PH	*Philosophical History*, trans. P. Athanassiadi (Athens, 1999)

ii) Iamblichus

Iamblichi Chalcidensis	*Iamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis Dialogos Commentariorum Fragmenta*, ed. J. Dillon (Leiden, 1973)

iii) Plotinus

Enn.	*Enneads*, trans. A.H. Armstrong, 6 vols. (Cambridge, Mass, 1966–1988)

iv) Proclus

In Alc.	*Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato*, ed. L.G. Westerink. (Amsterdam. 1954)
In Parm.	*Procli Commentarium in Platonis Parmenidem, in Procli Opera Inedita*, ed. V. Cousin, pp. 617–1258 Morrow-Dillon, *Proclus' Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, trans. G. Morrow and J. Dillon (Princeton, 1987)
In Parm. VII	*Procli Commentarium in Parmenidem, pars ultima adhuc inedita, interprete Guillelmo de Moerbeke*, ed. R. Klibansky, L. Labowsky (London, 1953)
In Tim.	*In Platonis Timaeum Commentarii*, ed. E. Diehl. 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1903–1906)
ET	Proclus, *Elements of Theology*. ed with translation and commentary by E.R. Dodds (Oxford, 1933)
PT	*Proclus, Théologie Platonicienne*, ed. H.-D. Saffrey and L.G. Westerink. 6 vols. (Paris, 1968–1997)

v) Syrianus

In Met.	*In Metaphysica Commentaria (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, VI:1)*, ed. W. Kroll (Berlin, 1902) Syrianus, *On Aristotle's 'Metaphysics' 3–4 and 13–14* (Ithaca, 2006–2008) trans. Dominic O'Meara and John Dillon (London, 2008)

vi) Others

SVF	*Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, ed. J. von Arnim. 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1903–1924)
OF	*Orphicorum Fragmenta*, ed. O. Kern. (Berlin, 1922)
Or. Chald.	*Oracles chaldaïques. Avec un choix de commentaires anciens*, ed. É. Des Places (Paris, 1971)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

a. *Primary Sources*

Alcinous
The Handbook of Platonism, translated with an introduction and commentary by J. Dillon (Oxford, 1993)

Anonymous
Anonymous Commentary on Plato's Parmenides, ed. G. Bechtle (Bern, 1999)
Prolégomènes à la philosophie de Platon, ed. L.G. Westerink (Paris, 1990)

Atticus
Fragments, ed. E. Des Places (Paris, 1977)

Chaldean Oracles
Oracles Chaldaïques avec un choix de commentaries anciens, trans. E. des Places, (Paris, 1996)

Cicero
Tusculan Disputations, trans. J.E. King (London, 1927)

Damascius
Damascii Dubitationes et Solutiones. De primis principiis In Parmenidem, ed. C.E. Ruelle, (Paris, 1889)
Damascii vitae Isidori reliquiae, ed. C. Zinzen (Hildesheim, 1967)
Damascius: Commentaire de Parménide de Platon, trans. L.G. Westerink, J. Combès 4 volumes, (Paris, 1997–2003)
Damascius, Traité des premiers principes, 3 volumes, trans. L.G. Westerink, J. Combès (Paris, 1986–1991)
The Greek Commentaries on Plato's Phaedo II: *Damascius*, trans. L.G. Westerink (Amsterdam, 1977)
Damascius, *The Philosophical History*, trans. P. Athanassiadi (Athens, 1999)

Diogenes Laertius
Lives, Teachings, and Sayings of Famous Philosophers, trans. R.D. Hicks (1931–1938)

Euclid
Thirteen Books of Euclid, trans. T. Heath (Cambridge, 1926)

Galen
De Semine ed. P. De Lacy (Berlin, 1992)
Πρὸς Γαῦρον περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἐμψυχοῦται τὰ ἔμβρυα K. Kalbfleisch, Abhandl. Der Königl. Preuß. Ak. Der Wiss. (1895)

Hermeias
Hermiae Alexandrini in Platonis Phaedrum scholia, ed. P. Couvreur (Paris, 1901)

Hesiod
The Theogony, trans. H.G. Evelyn-White (Cambridge, Mass., 1959)

Hippolytus
Refutatio omnium haeresium, ed by Miroslav Marcovich. (Berlin, 1986)

Homer
Homeri Ilias, vols. 1–2, M.L. West (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1998–2000)

Iamblichus
De Communi Mathematica Scientia Liber, ed. U. Klein (Stuttgart, 1975)
Iamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis dialogos commentariorum fragmenta, J.M. Dillon (Leiden, 1973)
Iamblichus' De Anima: Text and Translation, and Commentary, J. Finamore and J. Dillon (Leiden, 2002)
Jamblique. Les mystères d'Égypte, ed. É. des Places (Paris, 1966)
Protrepticus, ed. H. Pistelli (Stuttgart, 1967)

Julian
The Works of the Emperor Julian, trans. W.C. Wright. (New York, 1913)

Marinus
Marino di Neapoli. Vita di Proclo, ed. R. Masullo (Naples, 1985)
Neoplatonic Saints: The Lives of Plotinus and Proclus by Their Students, trans. with an introduction by M. Edwards (Liverpool, 2000)

Nicomachus of Gerasa
Introduction to Arithmetic, M.L. D'Ooge (London, 1926)

Numenius
Númenius, *Fragments*, E. Des Places (Paris, 1973)

Olympiodorus
The Greek Commentaries on Plato's Phaedo I: Olympiodorus, L.G. Westerink (Amsterdam, 1976)
Olympiodorus: Commentary on the First Alcibiades of Plato, L.G. Westerink (Amsterdam, 1956)

Origen
Contra Celsum, trans. M. Borret (Paris, 1967–1976)

Orphici
Orphicorum fragmenta, O. Kern (Berlin, 1922)

Philo
Philo, trans. F.H. Colson, 10 vols. (London, 1929–1962)

Philoponus
De Aeternitate Mundi contra Proclum, ed. H. Rabe (Lipsiae, 1899)

Plato
Platonis Opera, 5 volumes, ed. I. Burnet (Oxford, 1900–1907)
Plato: *with an English Translation* (London, 1917–1929)
Epinomis, trans W.R.M. Lamb
Epistles, trans R.G. Bury
Laws, trans. R.G. Bury
Parmenides, trans H.N. Fowler
Phaedo, trans. H.N. Fowler
Phaedrus, trans R. Hackforth
Philebus, trans H.N. Fowler
The Republic, trans. P. Shorey
Sophist, trans H.N. Fowler
Statesman, trans H.N. Fowler
Symposium, trans. W.R.M. Lamb
Timaeus, trans R.G. Bury

Plotinus
Enneads, 7 vols. trans. A.H. Armstrong. (Cambridge, Mass., 1966–1988)

Plutarch
Moralia, trans. F.C. Babbitt. (New York, 1927–1969)

Porphyry
De l'Abstinence 3 volumes, trans. J. Bouffartigue, M. Patillon, and A.Ph. Segonds (Paris, 1977–1995)
Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta ed. A. Smith (Stuttgart, 1993)
Vie de Porphyre, le philosophe néo-platonicien: avec les fragments des traités Peri agalmatōn et De regressu animae ed. J. Bidez. (Olms, 1964)

Proclus
Commentaire sur le Parménide de Platon: *traduction de Guillaume de Moerbeke Proclus*, ed. C. Steel. (Louvain, 1982)
The Elements of Theology, trans. E.R. Dodds (Oxford, 1963)
"The Final Section of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*. A Greek Retroversion of the Latin Translation," *Documenti e Studi Sulla Tradizione Filosifica Medievale VIII* 1997, trans D.G. MacIsaac
On the Existence of Evils, trans. by J. Opsomer and C. Steel (Ithaca, 2003)
Oracles Chaldaïques avec un choix de commentaires anciens, trans. E. des Places (Paris, 1996)
Parmenides usque ad finem primae hypothesis, nec non Procli Commentarium in Parmenidem, pars ultima adhuc inedita; interprete Guillelmo de Moerbeka. ed. R. Klibansky and C. Labowsky. (London, 1953)
Procli in Platonis 'Parmenidem' Commentaria, tomi I–III, libros I–V continentes, ed. C. Steel (Oxford, 2007–2009)
Procli, Diadochi in Platonis Rem publicam commentarii, 2 volumes, W. Kroll (Leipzig, 1899–1901)
Procli Diadochi in Platonis Timaeum commentaria, ed. E. Diehl. (Lipsiae, 1903)
Procli Diadochi in primum Euclidis elementorum librum commentarii, ed. G. Friedlein (Leipzig, 1873)

Procli Philosophi Platonici opera inedita, ed. V. Cousin (Paris, 1864)
Proclus: *A Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*, trans. G.R. Morrow (Princeton, 1970)
Proclus: Alcibiades I: A translation and commentary by W. O'Neill (The Hague, 1965)
Proclus: Commentaire sur le Timée, 5 volumes, trans. A.J. Festugière (Paris, 1966–1968)
Proclus' *Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, trans. G.R. Morrow and J. Dillon (Princeton, 1987)
Proclus: Commentary on Plato's Timaeus
Tarrant, H. (ed.), Proclus. *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus. Vol. 1, book I: Proclus on the Socratic State and Atlantis* (Cambridge, 2007)
Baltzly, D. (trans.), Proclus. *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus. Vol. 3, book II*: *Proclus on the World's Body* (Cambirdge, 2007)
Runia, D.T., Share, M. (trans.), *Proclus. Commentary on Plato's Timaeus, Vol. II: Proclus on the Causes of the Cosmos and its Creation* (Cambridge, 2008)
Proclus: *Sur le premier Alcibiade de Platon, 2 volumes*, ed. A.Ph. Segonds (Paris, 1986)
Proclus: *Théologie platonicienne, 6 volumes*, trans. H.-D. Saffrey and L.G. Westerink (Paris, 1968–1997)
The Six Books of Proclus on the Theology of Plato, trans. T. Taylor (London, 1816)
Trois études sur la providence: Proclus, ed. and trans. D. Isaac (Paris, 1977–1982)

Pseudo-Dionysius
Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works, trans. C. Luibheid (New York, 1987)

Seneca
Moral Essays, J.W. Basore, 3 vols. (London, 1928–1935)

Simplicius
In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria, ed. H. Diels, vols. 9 (Berlin 1882) and vol. 10 (Berlin, 1895)

Syrianus
Syriani in Hermogenem commentaria, vols. 1–2, ed. H. Rabe, (Leipzig 1892–1893)
Syriani in Metaphysica commentaria, ed. W. Kroll, (Berlin, 1902)
Syrianus, On Aristotle's 'Metaphysics' 3–4 and 13–14. Translated by J. Dillon and D.O'Meara (Ithaca, 2006–2008)

b. *Secondary Sources*

Apelt, O., *Platons Dialoge: Timaios und Kritias Übersetzt und erläutert* (Leipzig, 1922)
Archer-Hind, R.D., *The Timaeus of Plato* (London, 1888)
Baltussen, H., *Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius: The Methodology of a Commentator* (London, 2008)

Barnes, J., "'Drei sonnen sah'ich'… Syrianus et l'astronomie", *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'antiquité tardive*, A. Longo (ed.), (Naples, 2009)
Berg, R.A. van den, *Proclus' Hymns* (Leiden, 2000).
Brisson, L., "La figure de Chronos dans la théologie orphique et ses antécédents iraniens", in D. Tiffeneau (éd), *Mythes et représentations du temps* ("Phénoménologie et herméneutique"), Centre Régional de Publication de Paris, Paris 1985, pp. 37–60
———, *Proclus et l'Orphisme*, in J. Pépin et H.D. Saffrey (eds.), *Proclus. Lecteur et interprète des anciens*, Éditions du C.N.R.S., Paris 1987, pp. 43–103.
———, "Syrianus et l'orphisme," Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 463–498
Burkert, W., *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1972)
Cardullo, R.L, "Syrianus' Lost Commentaries on Aristotle", *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 22, 1986, pp. 112–124
———, "Siriano nelle storiografia filosofica moderna e contemporanea", *Siculorum Gymnasium (Rassegna della facolta di Lettere e Filosofia dell' Università di Catania)*, N.S. a XL nn. 1–2, (1987), pp. 71–182
———, "Giamblico nel commentario all Metafisica di Syriano", in H.J. Blumenthal and E.G. Clark, *The Divine Iamblichus. Philosopher and Man of Gods*, (Bristol, 1993), pp. 173–206
Charles-Saget, A., *L'architecture de divin: mathématique et philosophie chez Plotin et Proclus*, (Paris, 1982)
Cornford, F.M., *Plato's Cosmology* (Indianapolis, 1997)
Coulter, J.A., *The Literary Microcosom: Theories of Interpretation of the Later Neoplatonists* (Leiden, 1976)
D'Ancona, C., "Proclo: Enadi e arkhai nell' ordine sovrasensible", *Rivista di Storia della Filosofia* XLVIII, nuova serie 2, 1992, pp. 265–294
———, "La doctrine des principes: Syrianus comme source textuelle et doctrinale de Proclus: 1st Partie: Histoire du Probleme", in *Actes du Colloque International de Louvain en l'honneur de H.D. Saffrey et L.G. Westerink*, ed. by A.Ph. Segonds and C. Steel (Paris, 2000), pp. 189–225
D'Hoine, P., "Four Problems Concerning the Theory of Ideas. Proclus, Syrianus, and the Ancient Commentaries on the 'Parmenides'", in G. Van Riel–C. Macé (eds.), *Platonic Ideas and Concept Formation in Ancient and Medieval Thought* ("Ancient and Medieval Philosophy", I. XXXII), University Press, Leuven 2004, pp. 9–29.
———, "Le commentaire de Proclus sur le *Parmenide* comme source du Περι τῶν ἰδεῶν λόγος de Syrianus", Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 311–342
D'Ooge, M.L. *Nicomachus of Gerasa: Introduction to Arithmetic* (London, 1926)
Dillon, J., "Plotinus, *Enn.* 3.9.1 and Later Views on the Intelligible World", *TAPA* 100 (1969), pp. 63–70
———, "Iamblichus and the Origin of the Doctrine of the Henads", *Phronesis* 17 (1972), pp. 102–106

———, *The Middle Platonists* (Ithaca, 1977)
———, and Winston, D., *Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria: a Commentary on De gigantibus and Quod Deus sit immutabilis* (Chico, CA., 1983)
———, "Porphyry and Iamblichus in Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*", *Gonimos, Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies in Honour of Leendert Westerink* (Buffalo, 1988), pp. 21–48
———, "Tampering with the *Timaeus*: Ideological Emendations in Plato, with Special Reference to the *Timaeus*," *AJP* 110 (1989), pp. 50–72
———, "Plotinus, Philo and Origen on the Grades of Virtue", in *The Golden Chain*: *Studies in the Development of Platonism and Christianity* ed. J. Dillon (Aldershot, 1991), pp. 92–105
———, "Porphyry's Doctrine of the One," *SOPHIES MAIETORES. Chercheurs de sagesse. Hommage a J. Pepin*, (Paris, 1992), pp. 356–366
———, "The Neoplatonic Exegesis of the *Statesman*" in *Reading the Statesman: Proceedings of the III Symposium Platonicum*, ed. by C.J. Rowe (Bristol, 1992), pp. 364–374
———, "Iamblichus and the Henads Again," in the *Divine Iamblichus: Philosopher and Man of Gods*, H.J. Blumenthal and E.G. Clark, eds. (Bristol, 1993), pp. 48–54
———, "Damascius on Procession and Return," in *The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism*, ed. J.J. Cleary (Leuven, 1997), pp. 176–186
———, "The Role of the Demiurge in the *Platonic Theology*" in *Proclus et la Théologie Platonicienne: Actes du Colloque International de Louvain (13–16 mai 1998) En l'honneur de H.D. Saffrey* (Leuven, 2000), pp. 339–349
———, "The Platonic Philosopher at Prayer", *Metaphysik und Religion: Zur Signatur des spätantiken Denkens* (München, 2001), pp. 279–295
———, *The Heirs of Plato: A Study of the Old Academy (347–274 BC)*, (Oxford, 2003)
———, and Gerson, L.P. *Neoplatonic Philosophy: Introductory Readings* (Indianapolis, 2004)
———, "What Price the Father of the Noetic Triad? Some Thoughts on Porphyry's Doctrine of the First Principle," *Studies on Porphyry*, G. Karamanolis and A. Sheppard, eds. (London, 2007), pp. 51–59
———, "The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe Revealed: Syrianus' Exegesis of the Second Hypothesis of the Parmenides" Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), 233–246.
Dodds, E.R., "The *Parmenides* of Plato and the Origin of the Neoplatonic 'One' ", *CQ* 22 (1928), pp. 129–142
———, Proclus, *The Elements of Theology* (Oxford, 1963)
Festugière, A.J., *La révélation d'Hermés Trismégiste, III*: *Les doctrines de l'âme*, (Paris, 1953)
———, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste vol. IV*: *Le Dieu inconnu et la gnose* (Paris, 1954)
———, *Commentaire sur le Timée* vol. I-3 (Paris, 1966–1968)
Finamore, J., *Iamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul* (Chico, 1985)

Frede, M., "Syrianus on Aristotle's Metaphysics", *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité Tardive*, A. Longo (ed.). (Naples, 2009), pp. 23–58
Gersh, S., *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*: *An Investigation into the Prehistory and Evolution of Pseudo-Dionysian Tradition* (Leiden, 1978)
Glasner R., "Beginning, Middle, and End in Proclus' *Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*" (*Hermes* 120.1, 1992), pp. 194–204
Hadot, P., "La Métaphysique de Porphyre", in *Porphyre*, *Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique*, vol. XII (Geneva, 1965), pp. 127–163
———, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, II (Paris, 1968)
Heath, T., *Thirteen Books of Euclid* (Cambridge, 1926)
Issac, D., *Proclus: Trois Études sur la Providence III: De l'Existence du Mal* (Paris, 1982)
Lewy, H., *Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy: Mysticism, Magic, and Platonism in the Later Roman Empire*, (Paris, 1978)
Liddell. H.G., Scott R., and Jones, S., *A Greek-English Dictionary*, (Oxford, 1968)
Lilla, S., "Pseudo-Denys L'Aréopagite, Porphyrye et Damascius", in *Denys l'Aréopagite et sa postérité en orient et en occident*, ed. by Y. de Andia (Paris, 1997), pp. 117–152
Lloyd, A.C., "Grammar and Metaphysics in the Stoa", *Problems in Stoicism*, ed. A.A. Long (London, 1971), pp. 58–73
———, "Procession and Division in Proclus," in *Soul and Structure of Being in Late Neoplatonism: Syrianus, Proclus, and Simplicius*, ed. by H. Blumenthal and A.C. Lloyd (Liverpool, 1982), pp. 18–42
Long, A.A., "Language and Thought in Stoicism", *Problems in Stoicism*, ed. A.A. Long (London, 1971), pp. 75–113
Longo, A., "Le sostanze intermedie e le dimonstrazioni astronomiche nel prologo del commento di Siriano sui libri M e N della 'Metafisica' di Aristotele", *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*, XII (2001), pp. 85–124.
———, "Siriano e i precedenti pre-aristotelici del principio della contraddizione", *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*, XV (2004) pp. 81–97.
———, *Siriano e i principi della scienza. Prefazione di J. Barnes*, (Naples, 2005)
———, (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009)
Luna, C., "La Doctrine des Principes: Syrianus comme source textuelle et doctrinale de Proclus: 2nd Partie: Analyse des Texte", in *Partiel Actes du Colloque International de Louvain en l'honneur de H.D. Saffrey et L.G. Westerink*, ed. by A.Ph. Segonds and C. Steel (Louvain, 2000), pp. 227–278
Manolea, C.-P., *The Homeric Tradition in Syrianus* (Thessalonika, 2004)
———, "The Treatment of Ancient Greek Myth in Syrianus' Philosophical Works," Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 499–514
Merlan, Ph., "Monismus und Dualismus bei einigen Platonikern", *Parousia: Studieren Zur Philosophie Platons und zur Problemgeschichte des Platonismus, Festgabe für Johannes Hirschberger* (Main, 1965), pp. 145–154
Mueller, I., "Iamblichus and Proclus' *Euclid Commentary*" (*Hermes*, 115) 1987, pp. 334–348

——, "Syrianus and the Concept of Mathematical Number", in G. Bechtle–D. O'Meara (edd.), *La Philosophie des Mathématiques de l'Antiquité Tardive*, Éditions universitaires (Fribourg, 2000)

O'Meara, D., "Le fondement du principe de non-contradiction chez Syrianus", Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 299–310

——, *Pythagoras Revived: Mathematics and Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, (Oxford, 1989)

O'Neill, W., *Proclus: Alcibiades I: A Translation and Commentary* (The Hague, 1965).

——, "Time and Eternity in Proclus", *Phronesis* 7 (1962), pp. 161–165

Opsomer, J., "Proclus on Demiurgy and Procession: A Neoplatonic Reading of the *Timaeus*", *Reason and Necessity: Essays on Plato's* Timaeus ed. M.R. Wright (London, 2000), pp. 113–143

——, "Deriving the three intelligible triads from the *Timaeus*", in: A. Segonds and C. Steel (edd.), *Proclus et la Théologie Platonicienne. Actes du Colloque International de Louvain (13–16 mai 1998). En l'honneur de H.D. Saffrey et L.G. Westerink* (Ancient and medieval philosophy, Series 1, 26), (Leuven, 2000), pp. 351–372.

——, "Syrianus on Homonymy and Forms", in G. van Riel–C. Macé (eds.), *Platonic Ideas and Concept Formation in Ancient and Medieval Thought*, (Leuven, 2004), pp. 31–50.

Plass, P., "The Metaphysical Aspect of Tenses in Proclus", *International Philosophical Quarterly* vol. XXXIII, no. 2 (June, 1993), pp. 143–151

Praechter, K., "Das Schriftenverzeichnis des Neuplatonikers Syrianos bei Sudas," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 26, 1926, pp. 253–264

——, *Syrianos* (1): *Neuplatoniker*, in *RE* IV A.2 (1932) coll. 1728–1775

——, "Richtungen und Schulen im Neuplatonismus", *Kleine Schriften*, ed. by H. Dörrie, Collectanea, vol. VII (New York, 1973), pp. 165–216

Puech, H.-C., "Numénius d'Apamée et les théologies orientales au second siècle", *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales*, II, 1934, pp. 745–778

Reis, B., "The Circle Simile in the Platonic Curriculum of Albinus", in *The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism* (Leuven, 1997), pp. 237–267

Richard, M., "Apo Phonês", *Byzantion* 20 (1950), pp. 191–222

Rist, J.M., "The Neoplatonic One and Plato's *Parmenides*", *Proceedings of the American Philological Society* 93 (1962), pp. 389–401

Rosán, L., *The Philosophy of Proclus: The Final Phase of Ancient Thought* (New York, 1949)

Saffrey, H.-D., "Les Néoplatoniciens et les Oracles Chaldaïques" *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 27, 1981, pp. 220–225

——, "La théurgie comme phénomène culturel chez Neoplatóniciens (IVe–Ve siècles)" *Koinonia* 8, 1984, pp. 161–171

——, "'Le Philosophe de Rhodes' est-il Théodore d'Asiné? Sur un point obscure de l'histoire de l'éxegèse neóplatonicienne du Parménide," in *Mémorial André-Jean Festugière* (Genève, 1984), pp. 65–76

Sambursky, S. and. Pines, S., *The Concept of Time in Neoplatonism*: *Texts with Translation, Introduction. and Notes* (Jerusalem, 1971)

———, *The Concept of Place in Late Neoplatonism*: *Texts with translation, Introduction and Notes* (Jerusalem, 1982)
Sandbach, F.H., "Phantasia Katalēptikē", in *Problems in Stoicism*, ed. by A.A. Long (London, 1971), pp. 9–21
Segonds, A.Ph., *Proclus: sur le premier Alcibiade de Platon*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1986)
Shaw, G., *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (Univ. Park, PA, 1995)
Schneider, J.-P., "Les apories soulevées par Syrianus sur la these de l'identité de l'un et de l'être (Syrianus, *In metaph*., pp. 59, 16–60, 26)", Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 281–298
Schrenk, L., "Proclus on Space as Light," *Ancient Philosophy* 9, 1989, pp. 87–94
Sheppard, A.D.R., "Monad and Dyad as Cosmic Principles in Syrianus", in H.J. Blumenthal and A.C. Lloyd (eds.), *Soul and Structure of Being in Late Neoplatonism*, (Liverpool, 1982), pp. 1–13
———, *Studies on the 5th and 6th Essays of Proclus*' Commentary on the Republic (Göttingen, 1980)
———, "Proclus' Attitude to Theurgy", *CQ* 32 (1982), pp. 212–224
Siorvanes, L., *Proclus: Neoplatonic Philosophy and Science* (Edinburgh, 1996)
Smith, A., *Porphyry's Place in the Neoplatonic Tradition* (The Hague, 1974)
———, "HYPOSTASIS and HYPARXIS in Porphyry", in *Hyparxis e Hypostasis nel Neoplatonismo*, edd. F. Romano e D. Taormina, Olshki, (Florence, 1994), pp. 33–42
Sorabji, R., *Time, Creation and Continuum* (London, 1983)
Steel, C., *The Changing Self: A Study on the Soul in Later Neoplatonism: Iamblichus, Damascius, and Priscianus* (Brussels, 1978)
———, *Proclus*: *Commentaire sur le Parménide de Platon, traduction de Guillaume de Moerbeke, Tome I: Livres I à IV* (Leiden, 1982).
———, "Le *Sophiste Comme Texte Theologique dans l'Interpretation de Proclus,*" *On Proclus and His Influence in Medieval Philosophy* ed by E.P. Bos and P.A. Meijer (NY, 1992), pp. 51–64
———, "Proclus et Denys: De l'existence du mal", in *Denys l'Aréopagite et sa postérité en Orient et en Occident*, ed. by Y. de Andia, (Paris, 1996), pp. 89–115
———, "Iamblichus and the Theological Interpretation of the *Parmenides*", *Syllecta Classica*, vol. 8, 1997, pp. 15–30
Steel, C. and MacIsaac, D.G., "The Final Section of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*. A Greek Retroversion of the Latin Translation", *Documenti e Studi Sulla Tradizione Filosifica Medievale* VIII (1997), 211–267
Steel, C., "'Negatio Negationis': Proclus on the Final Lemma of the First Hypothesis of the *Parmenides*" in *Traditions of Platonism. Essays in Honour of John Dillon* ed. by J. Cleary (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 351–368
———, "Proclus on the Existence of Evils", *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* (Leiden, 1999), pp. 83–102
Steel, C., *Proclus*, *On the Existence of Evils*, trans. by J. Opsomer and C. Steel (Ithaca, 2003)

———, "Proclus on Divine Figures: An Essay on Pythagorean-Platonic Theology", in eds. M. Bonazzi, C. Lévy, and C. Steel, *A Platonic Pythagoras: Platonism and Pythagoreanism in the Imperial Age* (Belgium, 2007)

———, "Syrianus' Theological Interpretation of the *Parmenides*. The Time of the Divine Souls", Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 201–229

Tarrant, H., *Thrasyllan Platonism*, (Ithaca, 1993)

Taylor, A.E., *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* (Oxford, 1928)

Tieleman, T., "Diogenes of Babylon and Stoic Embryology", *Mnemosyne*, vol. XLIV, fasc. 1–2, (1991), pp. 106–125

Van Campe, L. "Syrianus and Proclus on the Attributes of the One in Plato's *Parmenides*", Longo, A., (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 247–280

Wear, S.K., "Syrianus' Teachings on the Soul", A. Longo, (ed.) *Syrianus et la Métaphysique de l'Antiquité: Actes du colloque international Université de Genève, 29 Septembre–1 Octobre 2006* (Naples, 2009), pp. 177–200

———, "Syrianus the Platonist on Eternity and Time", *Classical Quarterly* (vol. 58.2, 2008), pp. 648–660

West, M.L., *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983)

Westerink, L.G., Trouillard J. and A.Ph. Segonds, *Prolégomènes à la philosophie de Platon*, (Paris, 1990)

Whittaker, J, "Textual Comments on *Timaeus* 27C–D," *Phoenix* 27 (1973), pp. 387–391

Zeller, E. *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (vol. IV. 2), 4th ed. (Leipzig, 1903)

INDEX OF PHILOSOPHICAL TERMS AND NAMES

Albinus, 62, 196, 216
Amelius, 13, 18, 20, 76, 92, 93, 133, 210, 236, 291, 308
Atticus, 37, 75, 177, 196, 204

Being (*to on*), 8, 10, 18, 19, 20, 55, 74, 99, 102, 132, 139, 148, 149, 155, 205, 214–228, 281, 307, 313–315
  beings, 6, 9, 12, 16, 17, 54, 55, 56, 67, 69, 70, 74, 89, 94, 102, 110, 120, 121, 126, 131, 135, 153, 167, 170, 177, 182, 273, 109, 155
  Essential Living Being, 89, 90, 91, 92, 167
  Intelligible Living Being, 92, 126, 143, 148
  One-Being, 9, 11, 18, 92, 111, 152–155, 189, 214–228, 217, 273, 277

Chrysippus, 47, 48, 63, 83

Deamons (daimones), 133, 173, 176, 192, 193
Demiurge, 11–14, 16, 17, 28, 61, 63, 73, 74–77, 82, 83, 84, 87, 89, 91, 92, 33–96, 101, 103, 104, 114, 120, 121, 122, 135, 140, 146, 147, 163, 164, 167, 168, 170, 177, 181, 186, 189, 188–193, 196, 199, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 210, 248, 291, 320, 328, 329
  demiurges, 133, 173, 176, 183

Embryo, 44–51
Eternity, 7, 10, 11, 15, 26, 107, 108, 110, 111, 148, 149, 152–156, 162, 255, 263, 264, 265, 266, 286–294
Evil, 17, 35, 98–104, 198

Forms, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 40, 53–55, 57, 58, 63, 78, 83, 87, 89, 93, 94, 95, 106–111, 131, 135, 148, 156, 163, 205, 206, 217, 236, 237, 238, 289, 241, 248, 253, 261, 265, 282, 283, 284, 285, 299, 309

Gods, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 45, 51, 55–58, 61, 63, 73, 74, 76, 77, 81, 82–84, 91, 95, 101, 114, 128, 147, 149, 150, 166–170, 173, 184, 185, 189–193, 205, 206, 219, 231, 236, 239, 240, 273, 276, 277, 282, 285, 287
  anagogic gods, 53, 57
  connective gods, 143, 149
  encosmic gods, 11, 14, 83, 184, 189, 191, 192, 201, 205
  generative gods, 170, 181, 185
  guardian class, 53, 57, 88, 175

Henads, 5, 8, 9, 40, 58, 110, 149, 153, 154, 155, 156, 192, 219, 233, 237, 239, 240, 262, 307, 308, 317
Henomenon, 8, 9, 154, 163, 199, 299, 314, 315
Hermias, 4, 80, 96, 128, 206
hexad, 55, 59, 147, 284
Homer, 24, 27, 45, 176

Iamblichus, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 1, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 49, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 62, 63, 69, 70, 76, 78, 81, 84, 92, 93, 111, 114, 115, 116, 120, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 133, 134, 135, 136, 140, 141, 148, 154, 158, 162, 163, 164, 168, 170, 177, 181, 184, 185, 186, 198, 199, 204, 205, 210, 211, 218, 219,

Iamblichus (*continued*)
220, 226, 234, 235, 236, 237, 240, 248, 257, 262, 264, 276, 277, 283, 284, 285, 287, 291, 292, 293, 301, 307, 308, 314, 315, 317, 318, 325, 326, 328, 329, 330
Indirect speech, 23, 68
intellective realm (Noeric), 9, 12, 15, 42, 73, 77, 82, 91, 95, 145–150, 155, 185, 205, 264, 282, 316, 323, 328
intellective gods, 13, 147, 150, 181, 183
intellective-intellect, 78
intelligible-intellective, 76, 84, 95, 96, 143, 205, 284, 329
intellective triad, 12, 78, 84, 145, 150
intellectual hebdomad, 145, 147, 284
intelligible realm (Noetic), 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 40, 64, 68, 74, 75, 76, 81, 83, 87, 88, 89, 93, 96, 107, 111, 121, 126, 127, 131, 135, 140, 143, 148, 149, 153, 155, 156, 185, 191, 205, 209, 211, 212, 216, 219, 220, 231, 236, 238, 239, 240, 250, 262, 263, 265, 273, 276, 277, 280–285, *passim*.
Essential Living Being, 83, 91
intelligible forms, 107, 109
intelligible gods, 76, 87, 181, 201, 237
Intelligible Living Being, 92, 143, 148
intelligible triad, 8, 9, 170, 220, 314, 315

Kronos, 11, 12, 13, 76, 78, 81, 83, 84, 120, 121, 122, 181, 185, 321, 322, 323, 326

Limit (*peras*), 6, 7, 13, 17, 35, 40, 62, 73, 77, 78, 84, 91, 96, 99, 109, 149, 154, 183, 184, 231, 239, 252–270, 285, 300, 309

Matter, 7, 57, 63, 69, 109, 110, 111, 116, 140, 153, 185, 192, 216, 217, 245, 264, 265, 266, 267
forms in mater, 233–239, 241, 247, 253, 259, 261, 266
Mixing bowl (krater), 200–207
Moderatus, 216, 217

Neopythagorean, 35, 38–42, 114–116, 134–135, 216, 226, 291
Nicomachus of Gerasa, 38, 68, 261
Numenius, 13, 38, 68, 74, 75, 93, 306

One, 4
One and multiplicity, 252–270
One and spatial extension, 272–278, 320–323
One and structure of the *Parmenides*, 230–241
One and Unified, 312–315
One-Being, 222–228
One: wholes and parts, 242–250
Topic of the *Parmenides*, 214–220
Transcendent One, 7, 302–311, 316–318
Orphism, 2, 25, 76, 78, 80–84, 96, 125, 201, 247, 257, 264, 268
Ouranos, 75, 81, 82, 184–186

Paradigm, 10, 11, 12, 73, 75, 78, 87, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 109, 148, 154, 167, 170
Phanes, 13, 76, 81, 82, 83, 96
Plotinus, 12, 28, 41, 75, 76, 77, 87, 93, 94, 95, 96, 102, 103, 104, 126, 127, 128, 162, 196, 204, 217, 218, 269, 283, 290, 291, 307
Plutarch of Athens, 1, 20, 23, 248
Porphyry, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 28, 36, 41, 46, 48, 49, 50, 54, 55, 56, 57, 62, 63, 70, 75, 76, 87, 92, 93, 94, 126, 127, 129, 133, 135, 139, 140, 191, 196, 197, 199, 210, 212, 217, 218, 226, 227, 228, 236, 237, 239, 248, 263, 267, 276, 282, 283, 285, 291, 307, 315, 316
Pythagoras, 39, 42, 80, 167, 207, 257

Rhea, 11, 12, 13, 76, 78, 84, 115, 181, 185, 203, 324, 326

Soul, 7, 15, 16, 77, 92, 121, 126–129, 177, 184, 231, 130–136, 207, 233, 236, 237, 240, 255–270
allotment of souls to bodies, 42, 45, 46, 50, 56, 193, 203
circles of Same and Other, 140–142, 142–150
circuits of the soul, 282–294, 296–301
Individual Souls, 14, 15, 16–17, 40, 41, 57, 76, 83, 94, 104, 183, 209, 210, 211, 212, 231, 276, 330, 331
Procession (under soul)
Return (under soul)
Sameness (under soul)

Vehicle, 196–200

Theurgy, 175–178
Time, 7, 14–15, 69, 121, 127, 152–156, 158–164, 233, 255–257, 263–264, 266, 286–294, 296–301
Day and night, 15, 158–164
Eternity (*aeon*), 7, 10, 11, 15, 107, 110, 111, 127, 143, 148, 152–156, 162, 255, 257, 259, 263, 265, 266, 269, 296–294

Unlimitedness (*apeiria*), 6, 7, 8, 27, 28, 111, 154, 184, 185, 186, 239, 255, 257, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 269, 285, 300, 314, 315

Zeus, 11, 12, 13, 14, 25, 75, 76, 78, 81, 83, 91, 96, 120, 121, 122, 125, 181, 185, 190, 203

INDEX OF PASSAGES FROM ANCIENT AUTHORS

Alcinuous
Didask.
6 216
15 169
28 41

Atticus (ed. Des Places)
Fr. 3 177

Augustine
De civ. Dei
iii.16 191
x.19 17, 198

Damascius
De princ. (ed. Weterink-Combès)
I, 43, 86 308
I, 86, 9 308, 314
I, 103, 6 314
I, 126 53
I, 190, 25 206
I, 317, 6 83
II, 17, 1–17 6
II, 247, 25 237
In Parmen.
II, 16, 12 Ruelle 206
II, 24, 10–12 Ruelle 16
II, 69, 18 Ruelle 206
II, 70, 4 Ruelle 206
II, 75, 18–22 Ruelle 206
II, 131, 13–132.5 Ruelle 148
II, 132, 5 Ruelle 147
II, 136, 5–13 Ruelle 320
II, 153, 1–7 Ruelle 324
II, 150, 12 Ruelle 328
II, 174, 17 Ruelle 205
II, 175, 15 Ruelle 205
II, 182, 3 Ruelle 205
II, 185, 25 Ruelle 205
II, 193, 23 Ruelle 205
II, 254, 10–12 Ruelle 141
In Phd.
2.146 199
2.542 199
1.543 199
In Phil.
5.33–35 22
69.5 206
105, 49–51 155
177,1 205
253–254 291
PH
34 9
47 1
54 1, 9

Hermeias
In Phaedr.
146,24–147, 6 83
147, 18–148,1 80
154, 15–21 96

Homer
Il.
VIII.19 98
XIV.382 45
XX.12 73
Od.
IX.179 24

Iamblichus
de myst. (ed. Des Places)
2, 3, 71 126
3, 11, 31 51
3, 17, 143 126

Iamblichus, *de myst* (*continued*)
3, 24, 32 51
3, 27, 29 51
4, 8, 10 51
5, 7, 6 51
6, 2, 7 51
6, 3 52
10, 3, 5 51
in Nic. Arith. Intr.
6, 20–22 39
11, 8–9 39
In Parmen. (ed. Dillon)
Fr.2 237
Fr. 4 316, 317
Fr. 5b 326
Fr. 12 237
In Tim. (ed. Dillon)
Fr. 1 21
Fr. 16 56
Fr. 29 5
Fr. 34 76, 8
Fr. 48 116
Fr. 49 300
Fr. 50 15, 126, 127
Fr. 54 127
Fr. 53 133, 134
Fr. 56 140, 148
Fr. 62 14, 162
Fr. 63 11, 163
Fr. 75 185
Fr. 82 204
Fr. 85 210

Marinus
Vit. Procl.
11 2
12 2
13 23, 24
26 2
27 25
36 2

Olympiodorus
In Phaed. (ed. Westerink)
9.2.8–10 23
9.5.1 22
10.3.19 22
124.15.1 ff. 197

Or. Ch. (ed. Des Places)
249.12 201

Orph. Frag. (ed. O. Kern)
249.3 201
96 76
165–166 83
199 125

Plato
Epin.
984BC 169
Leg.
16E 266
709B 291
715E 243, 246
716C 263
716E 270
898A 120
Parmen.
42A6–8 218
129A 143, 148
137A6–B5 222
137C2 227, 247
137C4–6 230
137D5–7 242
137D6–8 252
138A3–6 272
139B3 282
139B4–5 280
140C1–2 286
141A7–B3 296
142A6–8 302
142B5–6 314
142B5–C7 249
142C7–D9 249
142D9–143A3 249
143C4–144E7 149
144C4–5 316
145A4–B5 150
145B6–147B8 150
145E3–5 328
145E7–146A8 328
144E8–148D4 10, 149

146A6–7 328
147C1–148D4 150
151E–155C 240
155E–157B 240, 330
Phaed.
113E6 211
Pol.
255E 309
257E 309
269A 170
272E6–8 122
272D 53
Resp.
476AB 167
478B 234
518AB 37
533C 223
597C 109, 111
Tim.
17A 32
18DE 44
24AB 52
27C 60
28A 66, 72, 80
28C 76
28E 75
29A 86
29E1–3 101, 175
30A 98
31A 106
32AB 112, 114
34B 124
35A 76
35B 130, 133
36C 138, 234
36CD 148
36D 142
37D 152, 163
37DE 158
39E8 76,93, 233
39E–40A 166, 168
40D 172
40D6 176
41A7–42E9 63
42D 167
40E 180
41A 188
41CD 194
41D 200
41E 208
41E1–2 196
53C–55C 300

PLOTINUS
Enn.
I.2.1. 17–20 41
I.2.4 41
I.2.7 41
I.7.1–6 126
II.1.5 75
III.1.17 102
III.2.1 102
II.3.17 53, 105
II.3.18 75
II.4.7 75
III.7.6 162
III.9.1 75, 93, 96
III.17.1 ff. 63
IV.2.2 235
IV.3.15 198
IV.3.19 196
IV.3.24 197
IV.4.14 212
IV.4.9 75
IV.8.2 212
IV.8.4–36 204
V.1.1 ff. 93, 218
V.5.1 ff. 75
VI.2.1 ff. 283
VI.9.6 263

PORPHYRY
de regr. An. (ed. Bidez)
11 197
41, 21 210
64, 15 198
de abst.
II. 36–43 56
II.46 198
II 47 197
Sent.
xxix p. 13.7 141, 199
xxxi 267
xxxvii 263

Porphyry (*continued*)
Fr. (Smith)
171 316
266F 49
267 49

Proclus
El. theol. (ed. Dodds)
7 11
23 16, 247
24 164
30 116
53 162
57 154
65 11, 156, 247
66 246
67 246, 247
73 41
89 260
90 260
92 265
92 267
94 265, 269
100 164
106 127
107 127
120 212
125 58
126 58
131 322
135 58
154 58
155 58
157 58
158 58
184 211
195 53
206 212
in Eucl.
147.3 300
103.2 300
88.2 300
91.1 300
92.4 300
97.19 116
98.13–14 248
114.25 116
142.8 248
In Parmen. (ed. Steel)
618.1 ff. 1
630. 37–633.12 18
635.31–638.2 18
638.14–640.16 18
640.12–641.4 214
651.37 51
668.10 51
672.32 51
690.16 51
692.2 51
811.32 110
1033.17–1034.22 222
1053.39–1054.1 217
1061.25–1064.10 230
1062.10–1062.17 5
1062.20–34 40
1114.29–1116.16 242
1116.11 252
1117.4–1175.22 280
1118.24–1123.16 252
1142.9–1143.30 272
1217.11–1219.7 286
in rem. Pub.
I, 71.2 1
I, 179.10–15 45
II, 64.6 24
II, 318.3 24
V, 42.19–22 78
VI, 6. 6–23 84
VI, 8. 4–10 84
VI, 9. 17–20 84
in Tim.
I. 20.27 32
I. 51.13–52.2 44
I.125.19 192
I. 143.17–18 50
I. 153.28 60
I. 218.28 62
I. 233.18 68
I. 241.3–31 62
I. 260.19 62
I. 306.1–31 13
I. 307.4–5 13
I. 308.19–23 12

I. 310.3–311.1 72
I. 310.8–15 13
I. 310.16–18 13
I. 314.22–315.4 80
I. 314.28 13
I. 322.18–325.11 86
I. 323.20–22 12
I. 374.2–375.5 98
I. 441.15–28 112
II. 14. 11–15 11
II. 15, 13–15 11
II. 95.18–96.7 118
II. 105.15–28 164
II.105, 28 125
II. 105.28–106.9 124
II. 218.20–220.3 130
II. 240.4 164
II.250.22 234
II. 253.23–254.4 138
II. 272.3–273.26 142
II. 313.19–24 164
III. 35.25–36.33 158
III.88. III.155, 18–22 52
III.108.5–108.28 166
III.154.16–156.3 172
III.174.13–176.7 180
III. 188.5–10 50
III.191.7 50
III.203.32–204.32 180
III. 234.18–26 198
III.236.31–237.9 194
III.247.26–249.26 200
III. 248.24–249.26 14
III. 275.26–277.5 210
III. 278.9–32 208
III.338. 21–25 129

Theol. plat.
I, 11, p. 50, 2–3 277
I, 18, p. 86, 20–21 103
II, 4, p. 20, 20–23 220
II, 12, p. 66.18–67.3 284
II, 12, p. 68, 6–22 277
II, 12, p. 69, 15 295
II, 19, p. 64, 21–65, 13 250
II, 20, p. 68, 7–13 249
III, 4, p. 31, 55 218
III, 8, p. 30, 15–23 257
III, 25, p. 165 246
IV, 8, p. 19–22 96
IV, 16, p. 48, 15–22 96
V, 30, p. 112, 16–20 329
V, 38, p. 142, 1–19 324

Syrianus
In Met.
10, 5 39
30, 10–12 264
88, 7–9 39
106, 31–34 170
107, 5 110
109, 33–110.7 95
123, 2 39
123, 6–9, 13 39
123, 19–20 39
132, 8–14 210
135, 16–24 40
140, 9–10 39
140, 14–18 39
140, 15 38
149, 30 38
175, 9 39